DONATELLO

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LORD BALCARRES

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DONATELLO

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CHRIST ON THE CROSS

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

DONATELLO

BY LORD BALCARRES

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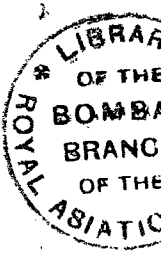

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PREFACE

An attempt is made in the following pages to determine the position and character of Donatello's art in relation to that of his contemporaries and successors. The subject must be familiar to many who have visited Florence, but no critical work on the subject has been published in English. I have therefore quoted as many authorities as possible in order to assist those who may wish to look further into problems which are still unsettled. Most of the books to which reference is made can be consulted in the Art Library at South Kensington, and in the British Museum. Foreign critics have written a good deal about Donatello from varied, if somewhat limited aspects. Dr. Bode's researches are, as a rule, illustrative of the works of art in the Berlin Museum. The main object of Dr. Semper was to collect documentary evidence about the earlier part of Donatello's life; Gloria and Gonzati have made researches into the Paduan period; Lusini confines his attention to Siena, Centofanti to Pisa; M. Reymond and Eugène Müntz are more comprehensive in their treatment of the subject.

With eleven or twelve exceptions I have seen the original of every existing piece of sculpture, architecture and painting mentioned in this book. I regret, however, that among the exceptions should be a work by Donatello

himself, namely, the Salome relief at Lille—my visits to that town having unfortunately coincided with public holidays, when the gallery was closed. I must express my thanks to the officials of Museums, as well as to private collectors all over Europe, for unfailing courtesy and assistance. I have also to acknowledge my indebtedness to the invaluable advice of Mr. S. Arthur Strong, Librarian of the House of Lords.

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DONATELLO

THE materials for a biography of Donatello are so scanty, that his life and personality can only be studied in his works. The Renaissance gave birth to few men of productive genius whose actual careers are so little known. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Donatello composed no treatise on his art; he wrote no memoir or commentary, no sonnets, and indeed scarcely a letter of his even on business topics has survived. For specific information about his career we therefore depend upon some returns made to the Florentine tax-collectors, and upon a number of contracts and payments for work carried out in various parts of Italy. But, however familiar Donatello the sculptor may be to the student of Italian art, Donatello the man must remain a mystery. His biography offers no attraction for those whose curiosity requires minute and intimate details of domestic life. Donatello bequeathed nothing to posterity except a name, his masterpieces and a lasting influence for good.

The *Denunzia de' beni*, which was periodically demanded from Florentine citizens, was a declaration of income combined with what would now be called census returns. Donatello made three statements of this nature,* in 1427,

* Gaye, Carteggio, i. 120. See Appendix II. A.

1433 and 1457. It is difficult to determine his age, as in each case the date of his birth is differently inferred. But it is probable that the second of these returns, when he said that he was forty-seven years old, gives his correct age. This would place his birth in 1386, and various deductions from other sources justify this attribution. We gather also that Donatello lived with his mother Orsa, his father having died before 1415. The widow, who is mentioned in 1427, and not in 1433, presumably died before the latter date. One sister, Tita, a dowerless widow, is mentioned in the earliest *denunzia*, living with her mother and Donatello, her son Giuliano having been born in 1409. It is probable that Donatello had a brother, but the matter is somewhat obscure, and it is now certain that he cannot be identified with the sculptor Simone, who used to be considered Donatello's brother on the authority of Vasari.

Competition for the Baptistery Gates.

The year 1402 marks an event of far-reaching importance in the history of Italian art. Having decided to erect bronze doors for their Baptistery, the Florentines invited all artists to submit competitive designs. After a preliminary trial, six artists were selected and a further test was imposed. They were directed to make a bronze relief of given size and shape, the subject being the Sacrifice of Isaac. Few themes could have been better chosen, as the artist had to show his capacity to portray youth and age, draped and undraped figures, as well as landscape and animal life. The trial plaques were to be sent to the judges within twelve months. Donatello did not compete, being only a boy, but

he must have been familiar with every stage in the contest, which excited the deepest interest in Tuscany. A jury of thirty-four experts, among whom were goldsmiths and painters as well as sculptors, assembled to deliver the final verdict. The work of Jacobo della Quercia of Siena was lacking in elegance and delicacy; the design submitted by Simone da Colle was marred by faulty drawing; that of Niccolo d'Arezzo by badly proportioned figures; while Francesco di Valdambrino made a confused and inharmonious group. It was evident that Ghiberti and Brunellesco were the most able competitors, and the jury hesitated before giving a decision. Brunellesco, however, withdrew in favour of his younger rival, and the commission was accordingly entrusted to Ghiberti. The decision was wise: Ghiberti's model, technically as well as æsthetically, was superior to that of Brunellesco. Both are preserved at Florence, and nobody has regretted the acceptance of Ghiberti's design, for its rejection would have made a sculptor of Brunellesco, whose real tastes and inclinations were towards architecture, to which he rendered services of incomparable value.

First Journey to Rome. For a short time Donatello was probably one of the numerous *garzoni* or assistants employed by Ghiberti in making the gates, but his first visit to Rome is the most important incident of his earlier years. Brunellesco, disappointed by his defeat, and wishing to study the sculpture and architecture of Rome, sold a property at Settignano to raise funds for the journey. He was accompanied by Donatello, his *stretissimo amico*, and they spent at least a year together in Rome, learning

what they could from the existing monuments of ancient art, and making jewelry when money was wanted for their household expenses. Tradition says that they once unearthed a hoard of old coins and were thenceforward known as the treasure-seekers—*quelli del' tesoro.* But the influence of antiquity upon Donatello was never great, and Brunellesco had to visit Rome frequently before he could fully realise the true bearings of classical art. It has been argued that Donatello never made this early visit to Rome on the ground that his subsequent work shows no traces of classical influence. On such a problem as this the affirmative statement of Vasari is lightly disregarded. But the biographer of Brunellesco is explicit on the point, giving many details about their sojourn; and this book was written during the lifetime of both Donatello and Brunellesco. The argument against the visit is, in fact, untenable. Artists were influenced by classical motives without going to Rome. Brunellesco himself placed in his competition design a figure inspired by the bronze boy drawing a thorn out of his foot—the *Spinario* of the Capitol. Similar examples could be quoted from the work of Luca della Robbia, and it would be easy to show, on the other hand, that painters like Masaccio, Fra Angelico, and Piero della Francesca were able to execute important work in Rome without allowing themselves to be influenced by the classical spirit except in details and accessories. Moreover, if one desired to press the matter further, it can be shown that in the work completed by Donatello before 1433, the year in which he made his second and undisputed visit, there are sufficient signs of classical motive in his architectural backgrounds to justify the opinion that he was acquainted with the ancient buildings of

Rome. The Relief on the font at Siena and that in the Musée Wicar at Lille certainly show classical study. At the same time, in measuring the extent to which Donatello was influenced by his first visit to Rome, we must remember that it is often difficult and sometimes impossible to determine the source of what is generically called classical. The revival or reproduction of Romanesque motives is often mistaken for classical research. In the places where Christianity had little classical architecture to guide it—Ravenna, for instance—a new line was struck out; but elsewhere the Romanesque had slowly emerged from the classical, and in many cases there was no strict line of demarcation between the two. But Donatello was very young when he went to Rome, and the fashion of the day had not then turned in favour of classical study. The sculptors working in Rome, colourless men as they were, drew their inspiration from Gothic and pre-Renaissance ideals. In Florence the ruling motives were even more Gothic in tendency. It is in this school that Donatello found his earliest training, and though he modified and transcended all that his teachers could impart, his sculpture always retained a character to which the essential elements of classical art contributed little or nothing.

The Predecessors of Donatello. Florence was busily engaged in decorating her great buildings. The fourteenth century had witnessed the structural completion of the Cathedral, excepting its dome, of the Campanile, and of the Church of Or San Michele. During the later years of the century their adornment was begun. A host of

sculptors was employed, the number and scale of statues required being great. There was a danger that the sculpture might have become a mere handmaid of the architecture to which it was subordinated. But this was not the case; the sculptors preserved a freedom in adapting their figures to the existing architectural lines, and it is precisely in the statuary applied to completed buildings that we can trace the most interesting transitions from Gothic to Renaissance. It is needless to discuss closely the work which was erected before Donatello's return from Rome: much of it has unhappily perished, and what remains is for the purposes of this book merely illustrative of the early inspiration of Donatello. Piero Tedesco made a number of statues for the Cathedral, Mea and Giottino worked for the Campanile. Lorenzo di Bicci, sculptor, architect, and painter, was one of those whose influence extended to Donatello; Niccolo d'Arezzo was perhaps the most original of this group, making a genuine effort to shake off the conventional system. But, on the whole, the last quarter of the fourteenth century showed but little progress. Indeed, from the time of the later Pisani there seems to have been a period of stagnation, a pause during which the anticipated progress bore little fruit. Orcagna never succeeded in developing the ideas of his master. The shrine in Or San Michele, marvellous in its way, admirable alike for diligence and sincerity, stands alone, and was not imbued with the life which could make it an influence upon contemporary art.

First Work for the Cathedral. The first recorded payment to Donatello by the Domopera, or Cathedral authorities, was made in November 1406, when he received ten golden florins as an instalment towards his work on the two prophets for the North door of the church, which is rather inaccurately described in the early documents as facing the Via de' Servi. Fifteen months later he received the balance of six florins. These two marble figures, small as they are, and placed high above the gables, are not very noticeable, but they contain the germ of much which was to follow. The term "prophet" can only be applied to them by courtesy, for they are curly-haired boys with free and open countenances; one of them happens to hold a scroll and the other wears a chaplet of bay leaves. There is a certain charm about them, a freshness and vitality which reappears later on when Donatello was making the dancing children for the Prato pulpit and the singing gallery for the Cathedral. The two prophets, particularly the one to the right, are clothed with a skill and facility all the more remarkable from the fact that some of the statues made soon afterwards, show a stiff and rigid treatment of drapery. Closely allied to these figures is a small marble statue, about three feet high, belonging to Madame Edouard André in Paris. It is a full-length figure of a standing youth, modelled with precision, and intended to be placed in a niche or against a background. Like the prophets just described, it has a high forehead, while the drapery falls in strong harmonious lines, a corner being looped up over the left arm. It is undoubtedly by Donatello, being the earliest example of his work in any collection, public or private, and on that account of importance, apart from its intrinsic merits.

The Cathedral Façade.

Donatello soon received commissions for statues of a more imposing scale to be placed on the ill-fated façade of the Cathedral. All beautiful within, the churches of Florence are singularly poor in those rich façades which give such scope to the sculptor and architect, conferring, as at Pisa, distinction on a whole town. The churches of the Carmine, Santo Spirito and San Lorenzo are without façades at all, presenting graceless and unfinished masonry in place of what was intended by their founders. Elsewhere there are late and florid façades alien to the spirit of the main building, while it has been left to our own generation to complete Santa Croce and the Cathedral. The latter, it is true, once had a façade, which, though never finished, was ambitiously planned. A large section of it was, however, erected in Donatello's time, but was removed for no reason which can be adequately explained, except that on the occasion of a royal marriage it was thought necessary to destroy what was contrived in the *maniera tedesca*, substituting a sham painted affair which was speedily ruined by the elements. The ethics of vandalism are indeed strange and varied. In this case vanity was responsible. It was superstition which led the Sienese, after incurring defeat by the Florentines, to remove from their market-place the famous statue by Lysippus which brought them ill-luck, and to bury it in Florentine territory, so that their enemies might suffer instead. Ignorance nearly induced a Pope to destroy the "Last Judgment" of Michael Angelo, whose colossal statue of an earlier Pontiff, Julius II., was broken up through political animosity. One wishes that in this last case there had been some practical provision such as that inserted by the House of Lords in the order for destroying

the Italian Tombs at Windsor in 1645, when they ordained that "they that buy the tombs shall have liberty to transport them beyond the seas, for making the best advantage of them." The vandalism which dispersed Donatello's work could not even claim to be utilitarian, like that which so nearly caused the destruction of the famous chapel by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Riccardi Palace (for the purposes of a new staircase);* neither was it caused by the exigencies of war, such as the demolition of the Monastery of San Donato, a treasure-house of early painting, razed to the ground by the Florentines when awaiting the siege of 1529. The Cathedral façade was hastily removed, and only a fraction of the statuary has survived. Two figures are in the Louvre; another has been recently presented to the Cathedral by the Duca di Sermoneta, himself a Caetani, of Boniface VIII., a portrait-statue even more remarkable than that of the same Pope at Bologna. Four more figures from the old façade, now standing outside the Porta Romana of Florence, are misused and saddened relics. They used to be the major prophets, but on translation were crowned with laurels, and now represent Homer, Virgil, Dante and Petrarch. Other statues are preserved inside the Cathedral. Before dealing with these it is necessary to point out how difficult it is to determine the authorship and identity of the surviving figures. In the first place, our materials for reconstructing the design of the old façade are few. There were various pictures, some of which in their turn have perished, where guidance might have been expected. But the representations of the Cathedral in frescoes at San Marco, Santa Croce, the Misericordia and Santa Maria Novella help us but little.

* Cinelli, p. 22.

Up to the eighteenth century there used to be a model in the Opera del Duomo: this also has vanished, and we are compelled to make our deductions from a rather unsatisfactory drawing made by Bernardo Pocetti in the sixteenth century. It shows the disposition of statuary so sketchily that we can only recognise a few of the figures. But we have a perfect idea of the general style and aim of those who planned the façade, which would have far surpassed the rival frontispieces of Siena, Pisa and Orvieto. We are met by a further difficulty in identifying the surviving statues from the fact that the contracts given to sculptors by the Chapter do not always specify the personage to be represented. Moreover, in many cases the statues have no symbol attribute or legend, which usually guide our interpretation of mediæval art. Thus Donatello is paid *pro parte solutionis unius figure marmoree;** or for *figuram marmoream.*† Even when an obvious and familiar explanation could be given, such as Abraham and Isaac, the accounts record an instalment for the figure of a prophet with a naked boy at his feet.‡

The Daniel and Poggio. Nine large marble figures for the Cathedral are now accepted as the work of Donatello. Others may have perished, and it is quite possible that in one at least of the other statues Donatello may have had a considerable share. With the exception of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, all these statues are derived from the Old Testament—Daniel, Jeremiah and Habbakuk, Abraham and the marble David in the Bargello, together with the two figures popularly called

* 23, xii. 1418. † 12, xii. 1408. ‡ 30, v. 1421.

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JOSHUA

CATHEDRAL, FLORENCE

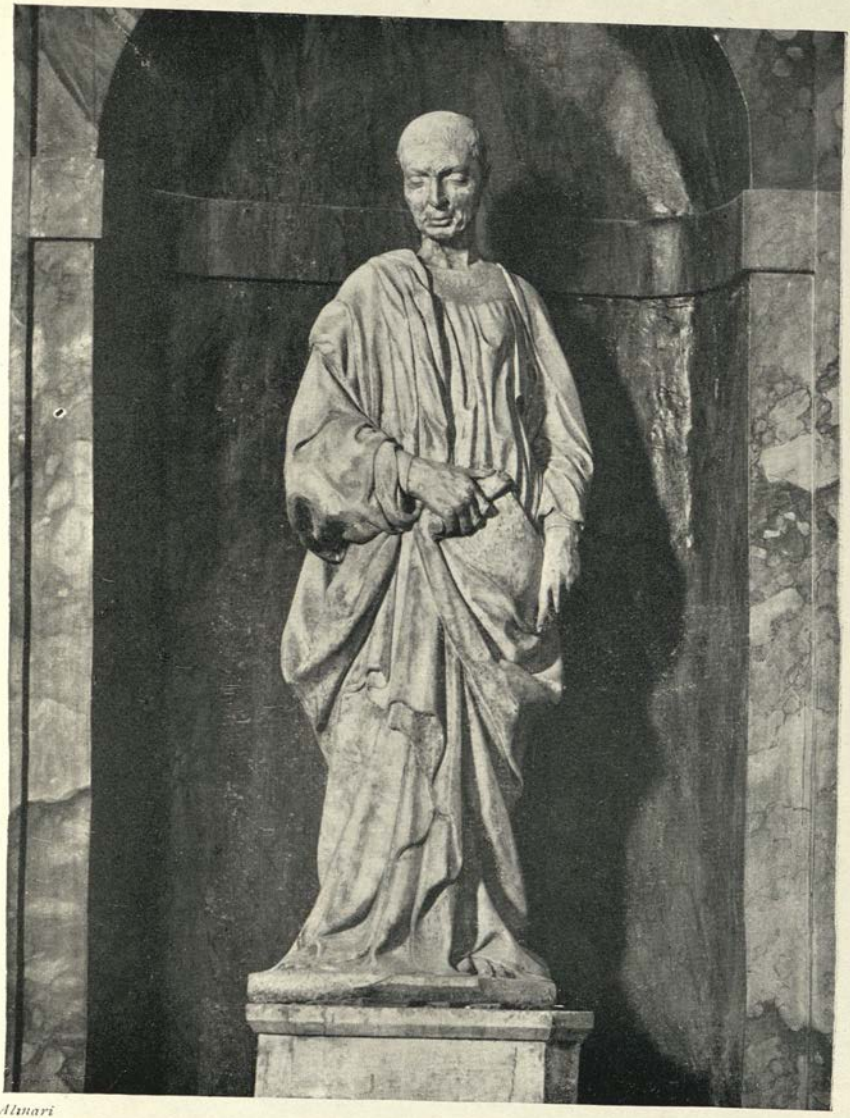
Poggio and the Zuccone. Among the earliest, and, it must be acknowledged, the least interesting of these statues is the prophet standing in a niche in the south aisle close to the great western door of the Cathedral. It has been long recognised as a Donatello,* and has been called Joshua. But, apart from the fact that he holds the scroll of a prophet, whereas one would rather expect Joshua to carry a sword, this statue is so closely related to the little prophets of the Mandorla door that it is almost certainly coeval with them, and consequently anterior in date to the period of the Joshua for which Donatello was paid some years later. We find the same broad flow of drapery, and the weight of the body is thrown on to one hip in a pronounced manner, which is certainly ungraceful, though typical of Donatello's early ideas of balance. It probably represents Daniel. He has the high forehead, the thick curly hair and the youthful appearance of the other prophets, while his "countenance appears fairer and fatter in flesh,"† reminding one of Michael Angelo's treatment of the same theme in the Sistine Chapel.

Like several of Donatello's statues, this figure is connected with the name of a Florentine citizen, Giannozzo Manetti, and passes for his portrait. There is no authority for the tradition, and Vespasiano de' Bisticci makes no reference to the subject in his life of Manetti. The statue is, no doubt, a portrait and may well have resembled Manetti, but in order to have been directly executed as a portrait it could scarcely have been made before 1426, when Manetti was thirty years old, by which date the character of Donatello's work had greatly changed. These traditional names have caused many critical difficulties, as, when accepted

* Osservatore Fiorentino, 1797, 3rd ed., iv. 216. † Daniel i. 15.

as authentic, the obvious date of the statue has been arbitrarily altered, so that the statue may harmonise in point of date of execution with the apparent age of the individual whom it is supposed to portray. A second example of the confusion caused by the over-ready acceptance of these nomenclatures is afforded by the remarkable figure which stands in the north aisle of the Cathedral, opposite the Daniel. This statue has been called a portrait of Poggio Bracciolini, the secretary of many Popes. Poggio was born in 1380 and passed some time in Florence during the year 1456. It has, therefore, been assumed * that the statue was made at this time or shortly afterwards, either as Donatello's tribute of friendship to Poggio or as an order from the Cathedral authorities in his commemoration. This theory is wholly untenable. We have no record of any such work in 1456. The statue does not portray a man seventy-six years old. Distinguished as Poggio was, his nature did not endear him greatly to the Florentine churchmen; and, finally, the style of the sculpture predicates its execution between 1420 and 1430. We can, of course, admit that Poggio's features may have been recognised in the statue, and that it soon came to be considered his portrait. In any case, however, we are dealing with a portrait-statue. The keen and almost cynical face, with its deep and powerful lines, is certainly no creation of the fancy, but the study of somebody whom Donatello knew. It is true there are contradictions in the physiognomy: sarcasm and benevolence alternate, as the dominating expression of the man's character. The whole face is marked by the refinement of one from whom precision and niceness of judgment would be expected. It is not

* Semper, I., p. 132.



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POGGIO

CATHEDRAL, FLORENCE

altogether what Poggio's achievements would lead one to expect; neither is it of a type which, as has been suggested, would allow us to call it the missing Joshua. The idea that Job may be the subject is too ingenious to receive more than a passing reference.*

There is one detail in the statue of Poggio which raises a problem familiar to students of fifteenth-century art, especially frequent in paintings of the Madonna, namely, the cryptic lettering to be found on the borders of garments. In the case of Poggio, the hem of the tunic just below the throat is incised with deep and clear cyphers which cannot be read as a name or initials. Many cases could be quoted to illustrate the practice of giving only the first letters of words forming a sentence.† In this case the script is not Arabic, as on Verrochio's David. The lettering on the Poggio, as on Donatello's tomb of Bishop Pecci at Siena and elsewhere, has not been satisfactorily explained. Even if painters were in the habit of putting conventional symbols on their pictures in the form of inscriptions, it is not likely that this careful and elaborate carving should be meaningless. The solution may possibly be found in Vettorio Ghiberti's drawing of a bell, the rim of which is covered with similar hieroglyphics. The artist has transcribed in plain writing a pleasant Latin motto which one may presume to be the subject of the inscription. If this were accurately

* Schmarsow, p. 10.

† The conclusion of Dello's epitaph, as recorded by Vasari, is H.S.E.S.T.T.L.—*i.e.*, *Hic sepultus est, sit tibi terra levis.* The bas-relief of Faith in the Bargello is signed O.M.C.L., *i.e.*, *Opus Mattæi Civitali Lucensis.* There is a manuscript of St. Jerome in the Rylands Library at Manchester in which long texts are quoted by means of the initial letters alone.

deciphered a clue might be found to unravel this obscure problem.*

Closely analogous to the statue which we must continue to call Poggio is a striking figure of Justice surmounting the tomb of Tommaso Mocenigo in the Church of San Giovanni e Paolo at Venice. Mocenigo died in 1423, and the tomb was made by two indifferent Florentine artists, whose poor and imitative work must be referred to later on in connection with the St. George. But the Justice, a vigorous and original figure, holding a scroll and looking downwards, so absolutely resembles the Poggio in conception, attitude, and fall of drapery, that the authorship must be referred to Donatello himself. It is certainly no copy. One cannot say how this isolated piece of Donatello's work should have found its way to Venice, although by 1423 Donatello's reputation had secured him commissions for Orvieto and Ancona and Siena. But it is not necessary to suppose that this Justice was made to order for the Mocenigo tomb; had it remained in Florence it would have been long since accepted as a genuine example of the master.

St. John the Evangelist and the marble David.

The third great statue made for the façade by Donatello is now placed in a dark apsidal chapel, where the light is so bad that the figure is often invisible. This is the statue of St. John the Evangelist, and is much earlier than Poggio, having been ordered on December 12, 1408. Two evangelists were to be placed on either side of the central door. Nanni

* MS. Sketch-Book in Bibl. Naz., Florence, lettered "Ghiberti," folio 51a.

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MOCENIGO TOMB

SAN GIOVANNI E PAOLO, VENICE

di Banco was to make St. Luke, Niccolo d'Arezzo St. Mark, and it was intended that the fourth figure should be entrusted to the most successful of the three sculptors; but in the following year the Domopera changed their plan, giving the commission for St. Matthew to Bernardo Ciuffagni, a sculptor somewhat older than Donatello. Ciuffagni was not unpopular as an artist, for he received plenty of work in various parts of Italy; but he was a man of mediocre talent, neither archaic nor progressive, making occasional failures and exercising little influence for good or ill upon those with whom he came in contact. He has, however, one valued merit, that of being a man about whom we have a good deal of documentary information. Donatello worked on the St. John for nearly seven years, and, according to custom, was under obligation to complete the work within a specified time. Penalty clauses used to be enforced in those days. Jacopo della Quercia ran the danger of imprisonment for neglecting the commands of Siena. Torrigiano having escaped from England was recalled by the help of Ricasoli, the Florentine resident in London, and was fortunate to avoid punishment. Donatello finished his statue in time, and received his final instalment in 1415, the year in which the figures were set up beside the great Porch. This evangelist, begun when Donatello was twenty-two and completed before his thirtieth year, challenges comparison with one worthy rival, the Moses of Michael Angelo. The Moses was the outcome of many years of intermittent labour, and was created by the help of all the advances made by sculpture during a century of progress. Yet in one respect only can Michael Angelo claim supremacy. Hitherto Donatello had made nothing but standing figures. The St. John sits; he is

almost inert, and does not seem to await the divine message. But how superb it is, this majestic calm and solemnity; how Donatello triumphs over the lack of giving tension to what is quiescent! The Penseroso also sits and meditates, but every muscle of the reposing limbs is alert. So, too, in the Moses, with all its exaggeration and melodrama, with its aspect of frigid sensationalism, which led Thackeray to say he would not like to be left alone in the room with it, we find every motionless limb imbued with vitality and the essentials of movement. The Moses undoubtedly springs from the St. John, transcending it as Beethoven surpassed Haydn. In spite of nearly unpardonable faults verging on decadence, it is the greater though the less pleasing creation of the two. The St. John surveys the world; the Moses speaks with God.

The fourth statue made for the Cathedral proper is contemporary with the St. John. The marble David, ordered in 1408 and completed in 1416, was destined for a chapel inside the church. The Town Commissioners, however, sent a somewhat peremptory letter to the Domopera and the statue was handed over to them. It was placed in the great hall of the Palace, was ultimately removed to the Uffizzi, and is now in the Bargello Museum. The David certainly has a secular look. This ruddy youth of a fair countenance, crowned with a wreath, stands in an attitude which is shy and perhaps awkward, and by his feet lies the head of Goliath with the smooth stone from the brook deeply embedded in his forehead. The drapery of the tunic is close fitting, moulded exactly to the lines of his frame, and above it a loose cloak hangs over the shoulders and falls to the ground with a corner of cloth looped over

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MARBLE DAVID

BARGELLO, FLORENCE

one of the wrists in a familiar way.* It would be idle to pretend that the David is a marked success like the St. John. It neither attains an ideal, as in the St. George, nor is it a profound interpretation of character like the Habbakuk or Jeremiah. Its effect is impaired by this sense of compromise and uncertainty. It is one of the very rare cases in which Donatello hesitated between divergent aims and finally translated his doubts into marble.

Statues of the Campanile.

We must now refer to a group of statues which adorn the Campanile, the great Bell tower designed by Giotto for the Cathedral. Not counting the numerous reliefs, there are sixteen statues in all, four on each side of the tower, and in themselves they epitomise early Florentine sculpture. Donatello's statues of Jeremiah, Abraham, and St. John the Baptist offer no difficulties of nomenclature, but the Zuccone and the Habbakuk are so called on hypothetical grounds. The Zuccone has been called by this familiar nickname from time immemorial: bald-head or pumpkin—such is the meaning of the word, and nobody has hitherto given a reasoned argument to identify this singular figure with any particular prophet. As early as 1415 Donatello received payment for some of this work, and the latest record on the subject is dated 1435. We may therefore expect to find some variety in idea and considerable development in technique during these twenty years. Donatello was not altogether single-handed. It is certain that by the time these numerous works were being executed he was assisted by scholars, and the Abraham was actually made in collaboration with

* *Cf.* Madame André's prophet and figures on Mandorla door.

Giovanni di Bartolo, surnamed Il Rosso. It is not easy to discriminate between the respective shares of the partners. Giovanni was one of those men whose style varied with the dominating influence of the moment. At Verona he almost ceased to be Florentine: at Tolentino he was himself; working for the Campanile he was subject to the power of Donatello. The Prophet Obadiah, which corresponds in position to the St. John Baptist of Donatello on the western face of the tower, shows Rosso to have been a correct and painstaking sculptor, with notions much in advance of Ciuffagni's; noticeable also for a refinement in the treatment of hands, in which respect many of his rivals lagged far behind. Judging from the inscription at Verona, Rosso was appreciated by others—or by himself:* he is, in fact, an artist of merit, rarely falling below a respectable average in spite of the frequency with which he changed his style.

St. John the Baptist.

Rosso does not compare favourably with Donatello. Obadiah is less attractive than St. John the Baptist, its *pendant*. The test is admittedly severe, for the St. John is a figure remarkable alike in conception and for its technical skill. Were it not for the scroll bearing the "Ecce Agnus Dei," we should not suggest St. John as the subject. Donatello made many Baptists—boys, striplings and men young and mature: but in this case only have we something bright and cheerful. He is no mystic; he differs fundamentally

* On the Brenzoni tomb in the Church of San Fermo: "Quem genuit Russi Florentia Tusca Johañis: istud sculpsit opus ingeniosa manus."

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ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

CATHEDRAL, FLORENCE

from the gloomy ascetic and the haggard suffering figures in Siena and Berlin. So far from being morose in appearance, clad in raiment of camel's hair, fed upon locusts and wild honey, and summoning the land of Judæa to repent, we have a vigorous young Tuscan, well dressed and well fed, standing in an easy and graceful attitude and not without a tinge of pride in the handsome countenance. In short, the statue is by no means typical of the Saint. It would more aptly represent some romantic knight of chivalry, a Victor, a Maurice—even a St. George. It competes with Donatello's own version of St. George. In all essentials they are alike, and the actual figures are identical in gesture and pose, disregarding shield and armour in one case, scroll and drapery in the other. The two figures are so analogous, that as studies from the nude they would be almost indistinguishable. They differ in this: that the Saint on the Campanile is John the Baptist merely because we are told so, while the figure made for Or San Michele is inevitably the soldier saint of Christendom. It must not be inferred that the success of plastic, skill less that of pictorial, art depends upon the accuracy or vividness with which the presentment "tells its story." Under such a criterion the most popular work of art would necessarily bear the palm of supremacy. But there should be some relation between the statue and the subject-matter. Nobody knew this better than Donatello: he seldom incurred the criticism directed against Myron the sculptor—*Animi sensus non expressisse videtur.** The occasional error, such as that just noticed, or when he gives Goliath the head of a mild old gentleman,† merely throws into greater prominence the usual harmony between his

* Pliny, xxxiv. 19, 3. † Bargello David.

conception and its embodiment. The task of making prophets was far from simple. Their various personalities, little known in our time, were conjectural in his day: neither would the conventional scroll of the prophet do more than give a generic indication of the kind of person represented. Donatello, however, made a series of figures from which the ἦθος of the prophets emanates with unequalled force.

Jeremiah and the Canon of Art.

The Jeremiah, for instance, which is in the niche adjacent to the still more astonishing Zuccone (looking westwards towards the Baptistery), is a portrait study of consummate power. It is the very man who wrote the sin of Judah with a pen of iron, the man who was warned not to be dismayed at the faces of those upon whose folly he poured the vials of anger and scorn; he is emphatically one of those who would scourge the vices of his age. And yet this Jeremiah has his human aspect. The strong jaw and tightly closed lips show a decision which might turn to obstinacy; but the brow overhangs eyes which are full of sympathy, bearing an expression of sorrow and gentleness such as one expects from the man who wept for the miserable estate of Jerusalem—*Quomodo sedet sola civitas!*

Tradition says that this prophet is a portrait of Francesco Soderini, the opponent of the Medici; while the Zuccone is supposed to be the portrait of Barduccio Cherichini, another anti-Medicean partisan. Probabilities apart, much could be urged against the attributions, which are really on a par with the similar nomenclatures of Manetti and Poggio. The important thing is that they

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JEREMIAH

CAMPANILE, FLORENCE

are undoubted portraits, their identity being of secondary interest; the fact that a portrait was made at all is of far greater moment to the history of art. Later on, Savonarola (whose only contribution to art was an unconscious inspiration of the charming woodcuts with which his sermons and homilies were illustrated) protested warmly against the prevailing habit of giving Magdalen and the Baptist the features of living and well-known townsfolk.* The practice had, no doubt, led to scandal. But with Donatello it marks an early stage in emancipation from the bondage of conventionalism. Not, indeed, that Donatello was the absolute innovator in this direction, though it is to his efforts that the change became irresistible. Thus in these portrait-prophets we find the proof of revolution. The massive and abiding art of Egypt ignored the personality of its gods and Pharaohs, distinguishing the various persons by dress, ornament, and attribute. They had their canon of measurement, of which the length of the nose was probably the unit.† The Greeks, who often took the length of the human foot as unit, were long enslaved by their canon. Convention made them adhere to a traditional face after they had made themselves masters of the human form. The early figures of successful athletes were conventional; but, according to Pliny, when somebody was winner three times the statue was actually modelled from his person, and was called a portrait-figure: "*ex membris ipsorum similitudine expressa, quas iconicas vocant!*" Not until Lysistratus first thought of reproducing the human image by means of a cast from the face itself, did they get the true portrait in place of their previous

* In 1496. See Gruyer, "Les Illustrations," 1879, p. 206.

† C. Müller, "Ancient Art and its Remains," p. 227.

efforts to secure generalised beauty.* In fact, their canon was so stringent that it would permit an Apollo Belvedere to be presented by foppish, well-groomed adolescence, with plenty of vanity but with little strength, and altogether without the sign-manual of godhead or victory. Despite shortcomings, Donatello seldom made the mistake of merging the subject in the artist's model: he did not forget that the subject of his statue had a biography. He had no such canon. Italian painting had been under the sway of Margaritone until Giotto destroyed the traditional system. Early Italian coins show how convention breeds a canon—they were often depraved survivals of imperial coins, copied and recopied by successive generations until the original meaning had completely vanished, while the semblance remained in debased outline. Nothing can be more fatal than to make a canon of art, to render precise and exact the laws of æsthetics. Great men, it is true, made the attempt. Leonardo, for instance, gives the recipe for drawing anger and despair. His "Trattato della Pintura"† describes the gestures appropriate for an orator addressing a multitude, and he gives rules for making a tempest or a deluge. He had a scientific law for putting a battle on to canvas, one condition of which was that "there must not be a level spot which is not trampled with gore." But Leonardo da Vinci did no harm; his canon was based on literary rather than artistic interests, and he was too wise to pay much attention to his own rules. Another man who tried to systematise art was Leon Battista Alberti, who gave the exact measurements of ideal beauty, length and circumference of limbs, &c.,

* Pliny, xxxvi. 44.

† Printed in Richter's "Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci," vol. i.

thus approaching a physical canon. The absurdity of these theories is well shown in the "Rules of Drawing Caricatures," illustrated by "mathematical diagrams."* Development and animation are impossible wherever an art is governed by this sterile and deadening code of law. The religious art of the Eastern Church has been stationary for centuries, confined within the narrow limits of hieratic conventions. Mount Athos has the pathetic interest of showing the dark ages surviving down to our own day in the vigour of unabated decadence. Though not subjected to any serious canon, the predecessors of Donatello seemed at one time in danger of becoming conventionalised. But Donatello would not permit his art to be divorced from appeals to reason and intellect; once started, his theory held it own. Donatello was bound by no laws; with all its cadence and complexity his art was unsuited to a canon as would be the art of music. He seems almost to have disregarded the ordinary physical limitations under which he worked. He had no "cant of material," and whether in stone, bronze, wood, or clay, he went straight ahead in the most unconcerned manner.

Habbakuk and the Sense of Distance.

We do not know much about Habbakuk. He left two or three pages of passionate complaint against the iniquity of the land, but his "burden" lacks those outbursts of lyric poetry which are found in most of the other minor prophets. Donatello gives him the air of a thinker. He holds a long scroll to which he points with his right hand while looking downward, towards the door of the Cathedral. It is a strong head,

* By Francis Grose, the Antiquary. London, 1788.

as full of character as the Jeremiah. But Habbakuk is less the man of action, and the deep lines about the mouth and across the forehead show rather the fruits of contemplation. There may be a note of scepticism in the face. But this Habbakuk is no ascetic, and there is much strength in reserve: his comment though acrid would be just. The veins in the throat stand out like cords. They are much more noticeable in the photograph than when one sees the statue from the Piazza. It must be remembered that these figures on the Campanile are something like fifty-five feet from the ground: they were made for these lofty positions, and were carved accordingly. They show Donatello's sense of distance; the Zuccone shows his sense of light and shade, the Abraham his sense of proportion. Donatello had the advantage of making these figures for particular places; his sculpture was eminently adapted to the conditions under which it was to be seen. In the vast majority of cases modern sculpture is made for undetermined positions, and is fortunate if it obtains a suitable *emplacement*. It seldom gets distance, light and proportion in harmony with the technical character of the carving. Donatello paid the greatest care to the relation between the location of the statue and its carving: his work consequently suffers enormously by removal: to change its position is to take away something given it by the master himself. The Judith looks mean beneath the Loggia de' Lanzi; the original of the St. George in the museum is less telling than the copy which has replaced it at Or San Michele. Photography is also apt to show too clearly certain exaggerations and violences deliberately calculated by Donatello to compensate for distance, as on the Campanile, or for darkness, as on the Cantoria. The reproductions, therefore,

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HABAKKUK

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of those works not intended to be seen from close by must be judged with this reservation. The classical sculptors seem to have been oblivious of this sense of distance. Cases have been quoted to show that they did realise it, such as the protruding forehead of Zeus or the deep-set eyes of the Vatican Medusa. These are accidents, or at best coincidences, for the sense of distance is not shown by merely giving prominence to one portion or feature of a face. In Roman art the band of relief on the Column of Trajan certainly gets slightly broader as the height increases: but the modification was half-hearted. It does not help one to see the carving, which at the summit is almost meaningless, while it only serves to diminish the apparent height of the column. So, too, in the triumphal arches of the Roman Emperors little attention was paid to the relative and varying attitudes of the bas-reliefs. From Greek art the Parthenon Frieze gives a singular example of this unrealised law. When *in situ* the frieze was only visible at a most acute angle and in a most unfavourable light: beyond the steps it vanished altogether, so one was obliged to stand among the columns to see it at all, and it was also necessary to look upwards almost perpendicularly. The frieze is nearly three feet four inches high and its upper part is carved in rather deeper relief than the base: but, even so, the extraordinary delicacy of this unique carving was utterly wasted, since the technical treatment of the marble was wholly unsuited to its *emplacement*. The amazing beauty of the sculpture and the unsurpassed skill of Phidias were never fully revealed until its home had been changed from Athens to Bloomsbury.

The Zuccone, "Realism" and Nature.

The Zuccone is one of the eternal mysteries of Italian art. What can have been Donatello's intention? Why give such prominence to this graceless type? Baldinucci called it St. Mark.* Others have been misled by the lettering on the plinth below the statue "David Rex": beneath the Jeremiah is "Salomon Rex."† These inscriptions belonged, of course, to the kings which made way for Donatello's prophets. The Zuccone must belong to the series of prophets; it is fruitless to speculate which. Cherichini may have inspired the portrait. Its ugliness is insuperable. It is not the vulgar ugliness of a caricature, nor is it the audacious embodiment of some hideous misshapen creature such as we find in Velasquez, in the Gobbo of Verona, or in the gargoyles of Notre Dame. There is no deformity about it, probably very little exaggeration. It is sheer uncompromising ugliness; rendered by the cavernous mouth, the blear eyes, the flaccid complexion, the unrelieved cranium—all carried to a logical conclusion in the sloping shoulders and the simian arms. But the Zuccone is not "revenged of nature": there is nothing to "induce contempt." On the other hand, indeed, there is a tinge of sadness and compassion, objective and subjective, which gives it a charm, even a fascination. *Tanto e bella*, says Bocchi, *tanto e vera, tanto e naturale*, that one gazes upon it in astonishment, wondering in truth why the statue does not speak! ‡ Bocchi's criticism cannot be improved. The problem has been obfuscated by the modern jargon of art. Donatello has been charged with orgies of realism and so forth. There may be realism, but the term must be used with discretion:

* Edition 1768, p. 74. † *E.g.*, Milanesi, Catalogo, 1887, p. 6.

‡ Cinelli's edition, 1677, p. 45.

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THE ZUCCONE

CAMPANILE, FLORENCE

nowadays it generally connotes the ugly treatment of an ugly theme, and is applied less as a technical description than as a term of abuse. Donatello was certainly no realist in the sense that an ideal was excluded, nor could he have been led by realism into servile imitation or the multiplication of realities. After a certain point the true ceases to be true, as nobody knew better than Barye, the greatest of the "realists." The Zuccone can be more fittingly described in Bocchi's words. It is the creation of a verist, of a naturalist, founded on a clear and intimate perception of nature. Donatello was pledged to no system, and his only canon, if such existed, was the canon of observation matured by technical ability. We have no reason to suppose that Donatello claimed to be a deep thinker. He did not spend his time, like Michael Angelo, in devising theories to explain the realms of art. He was without analytical pedantry, and, like his character, his work was naïve and direct. Nor was he absorbed by appreciation of "beauty," abstract or concrete. If he saw a man with a humped back or a short leg he would have been prepared to make his portrait, assuming that the entity was not in conflict with the subject in hand. Hence the Zuccone. Its mesmeric ugliness is the effect of Donatello's gothic creed, and it well shows how Donatello, who from his earliest period was opposed to the conventions of the Pisan school, took the lead among those who founded their art upon the observation of nature. A later critic, shrewd and now much neglected, said that Titian "contented himself with pure necessity, which is the simple imitation of nature."* One could not say quite so much of Donatello, in whom, curiously enough, the love of nature was limited to its

* Raffaelle Mengs, Collected Works. London, 1796, I., p. 132.

human aspect. He seems to have been impervious to outdoor nature, to the world of plants and birds and beasts. Ghiberti, his contemporary, was a profound student of natural life in all its forms, and the famous bronze doors of the Baptistery are peopled with the most fanciful products of his observation. "I strove to imitate nature to the utmost degree," he says in his commentary.* Thus Ghiberti makes a bunch of grapes, and wanting a second bunch as *pendant*, he takes care to make it of a different species. The variety and richness of his fruit and flower decoration are extraordinary and, if possible, even more praiseworthy than the dainty garlands of the Della Robbia. With Donatello all is different. He took no pleasure in enriching his sculpture in this way. The Angel of the Annunciation carries no lily; when in the Tabernacle of St. Peter's he had to decorate a pilaster he made lilies, but stiff and unreal. His trees in the landscape backgrounds of the Charge to Peter and the Release of Princess Sabra by St. George are tentative and ill-drawn. The children of the Cantoria, the great singing gallery made for the Cathedral, are dancing upon a ground strewn with flowers and fruit. The idea was charming, but in executing it Donatello could only make *cut* flowers and withered fruit. There is no life in them, no savour, and the energy of the children seems to have exhausted the humbler form of vitality beneath their feet. Years afterwards, when Donatello's assistants were allowed a good deal of latitude, we find an effort to make more use of this invaluable decoration: the pulpits of San Lorenzo, for instance, have some trees and climbing weeds showing keen study of nature. But Donatello himself always preferred the architectural background, in contrast to

* Printed in Vasari, Lemonnier Ed., 1846, vol. i.

Leonardo da Vinci, who, with all his love of building, seldom if ever used one in the backgrounds of his pictures: but then Leonardo was the most advanced botanist of his age.

The Zuccone and the Sense of Light and Shade.

Speaking of the employment of light and shade as instruments in art, Cicero says: "*Multa vident pictores in umbris et in eminentia, quæ nos non videmus.*" One may apply the dictum to the Zuccone where Donatello has carved the head with a rugged boldness, leaving the play of light and shade to complete the portrait. Davanzati was explicit on the matter,* showing that the point of view from which the Zuccone was visible made this coarse treatment imperative, if the spectator below was to see something forcible and impressive. "The eyes," he says, "are made as if they were dug out with a shovel: eyes which would appear lifelike on the ground level would look blind high up on the Campanile, for distance consumes diligence—*la lontananza si mangia la diligenzia.*" The doctrine could not be better stated, and it governs the career of Donatello. There is nothing like the Zuccone in Greek art: nothing so ugly, nothing so wise. Classical sculptors in statues destined for lofty situations preserved the absolute truth of form, but their diligence was consumed by distance. What was true in the studio lost its truth on a lofty pediment or frieze. They preserved accuracy of form, but they sacrificed accuracy of appearance; whereas relative truth was in reality far more important—until, indeed, the time comes when the lights and shades of the studio are reproduced in some art gallery or museum.

* In Introduction to his translation of Tacitus.

Abraham and the Sense of Proportion.

The statue of Abraham and Isaac on the east side of the Campanile is interesting as being the first group made by Donatello. The subject had already been treated by Brunellesco and Ghiberti in relief. Donatello had to make his figures on a larger scale. Abraham is a tall, powerful man with a long flowing beard, looking upwards as he receives the command to sheath the dagger already touching the shoulder of his son. The naked boy is kneeling on his left leg and is modelled with a good deal of skill, though, broadly speaking, the treatment is rather archaic in character. It is a tragic scene, in which the contrast of the inexorable father and the resigned son is admirably felt. Donatello had to surmount a technical difficulty, that of putting two figures into a niche only intended for one. His sense of proportion enabled him to make a group in harmony with its position and environment. It *fits* the niche. Statues are so often unsuited to their niches; scores of examples could be quoted from Milan Cathedral alone where the figures are too big or too small, or where the base slopes downwards and thus fails to give adequate support to the figure. There is an old tradition which illustrates Donatello's aptitude for grouping. Nanni di Banco had to put four martyrs into a niche of Or San Michele, and having made his statues found it impossible to get them in. Donatello was invoked, and by removing a superfluous bit of marble here, and knocking off an arm there, the four figures were successfully grouped together. The statues, it must be admitted, show no signs of such usage, and Nanni was a competent person: but the story would not have been invented unless Donatello had been credited in his own day with the reputation of being

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ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

CAMPANILE, FLORENCE

a master of proportion and grouping. Donatello, however, never really excelled in the free standing group. His idea was a suite or series of figures against a background, a bas-relief. The essential quality of a group is that there should be something to unite the figures. We find this in the Abraham, but the four martyrs by Nanni di Banco are standing close together as if by chance, and cannot properly be called a group in anything but juxtaposition of figures. Il Rosso helped to make Abraham. The commission was given jointly to the two sculptors in March 1421, and the statue was finished, with unusual expedition, by November of the same year. The hand of Rosso cannot be easily detected except in the drapery, which differs a good deal from Donatello's. The latter must have been chiefly responsible for the grouping and wholly so for the fine head of Abraham.

Drapery and Hands. Rosso's drapery was apt to be treated in rather a small way with a number of little folds. Donatello, on the other hand, often tended to the opposite extreme, and in the Campanile figures we see the clothes hanging about the prophets in such ample lines that the Zuccone and Jeremiah are overweighted with togas which look like heavy blankets. Habbakuk and the Baptist are much more skilfully draped, deference being shown to the anatomy. "To make drapery merely natural," said Sir Joshua Reynolds, "is a mechanical operation to which neither genius nor taste are required: whereas it requires the nicest judgment to dispose the drapery so that the folds have an easy communication, and gracefully follow each other with such natural

negligence as to look like the effect of chance, and at the same time show the figure under it to the utmost advantage." * The sculptors of the fifteenth century did not find it so easy to make drapery look purely natural, and we are often confronted by cases where they failed in this respect. It arose partly from a belief that drapery was nothing more than an accessory, partly also from their ignorance of what was so fully realised by the Greeks, that there can be very little grace in a draped figure unless there are the elements of beauty below. Another comment suggested by Donatello's early work in marble is that he was not quite certain how to model or dispose the hands. They are often unduly big; Michael Angelo started with the same mistake: witness his David and the Madonna on the Stairs. It was a mistake soon rectified in either case. But till late in life Donatello never quite succeeded in giving nerve or occupation to his hands. St. Mark, St. Peter, and St. John all have a book in their left hands, but none of them *hold* the book; it has no weight, the hand shows no grip and has no sense of possession. Neither did Donatello always know where to put the hands, giving them the shy and self-conscious positions affected by the schoolboy. The Bargello David is a case in point. His hands are idle, they have really nothing to do, and their position is arbitrary in consequence. It is all a descent from the Gothic, where we find much that is inharmonious and paradoxical, and a frequent lack of concord between the component parts. St. George, standing erect in his niche, holds the shield in front of him, its point resting on the ground. But, notwithstanding the great progress made by Donatello in modelling

* Discourses, 1778, p. 116.

these hands—(so much indeed that one might almost suspect the bigger hands of contemporary statues to be faithful portraits of bigger hands)—one feels that the shield does not owe its upright position to the constraint of the hands. They do not reflect the outward pressure of the heavy shield, which could almost be removed without making it necessary to modify their functions or position. It was reserved for Michael Angelo to achieve the unity of purpose and knowledge needed in portraying the human hand. He was the first among Italian sculptors to render the relation of the hand to the wrist, the wrist to the forearm, and thence to the shoulder and body. In the fifteenth century nobody fully understood the sequence of muscles which correlates every particle of the limb, and Donatello could not avoid the halting and inconclusive outcome of his inexperience.

Minor Works for the Cathedral.

There remain a few minor works for the Cathedral which require notice. In October 1421 an unfinished figure by Ciuffagni was handed over to Donatello and Il Rosso. It is probable that Dr. Semper is correct in thinking that this may be the statue on the East side of the Cathedral hitherto ascribed to Niccolo d'Arezzo, though it can hardly be the missing Joshua. We have here a middle-aged man with a long beard, his head inclined forward and supported by his upraised hand with its forefinger extended. Donatello was fond of youth, but not less of middle age. With all their power these prophets are middle-aged men who would walk slowly and whose gesture would be fraught with mature dignity. Donatello did not limit to the very young or the very old the privilege of seeing

visions and dreaming dreams. Two other statues by Donatello have perished. These are Colossi,* ordered probably between 1420 and 1425, and made of brick covered with stucco or some other kind of plaster. They stood outside the church, on the buttress pillars between the apsidal chapels. One of them was on the north side, as an early description mentions the "*Gigante sopra la Annuntiata*," † that is above the Annunciation on the Mandorla door. The perishable material of these statues was selected, no doubt, owing to the difficulty and expense of securing huge monoliths of marble. In this case one must regret their loss, as the distance from which they would be seen would amply justify their heroic dimensions. But the idea of Colossi, which originated in Egypt and the East, is to astonish, and to make the impression through the agency of bulk. The David by Michael Angelo is great in spite of its unwieldiness. Michael Angelo himself was under no illusions about these Colossi. His letter criticising the proposal to erect a colossal statue of the Pope on the Piazza of San Lorenzo is in itself a delightful piece of humour, and ridiculed the conceit with such pungency that the project was abandoned. Finally, Donatello made two busts of prophets for the Mandorla door. The commission is previous to May 1422, when it is noted that Donatello was to receive six golden florins for his work. They are profile heads carved in relief upon triangular pieces of marble, which fill two congested architectural corners. They look like the result of a whim, and at first sight one would think they were ordered late in the history of the door to supplement

* They were standing as late as 1768. Baldinucci, p. 79.

† Memoriale, 1510.

or replace something unsatisfactory. But this is not the case. Half corbel and half decoration, they are curious things: one shows a young man, the other an older bearded man. Both have long hair drawn back by a fillet, and in each case one hand is placed across the breast. They have quite a classical look, and are the least interesting as well as the least noticeable of the numerous sculptures made for the Cathedral by Donatello. The Domopera evidently appreciated his talent. To this day, besides these busts and the two small prophets, there survive at least nine marble figures made for the Duomo, some of them well over life size. There were also the Colossi, and it will be seen later on that the Domopera gave him further commissions for bronze doors, Cantoria, altar and stained glass; he also was employed as an architectural expert. Years of Donatello's life were spent on the embellishment of Santa Maria del Fiore, a gigantic task which he shared with his greatest predecessors and his most able contemporaries. The task, indeed, was never fully accomplished. The Campanile is not crowned by the spire destined for it by Giotto: the façade has perished and the interior is marred by the errors of subsequent generations. But the Cathedral of Florence must nevertheless take high rank among the most stately churches of Christendom.

Or San Michele, St. Peter and St. Mark.

From the earliest times there used to be a church dedicated to St. Michael, which stood within the *orto*, the garden named after the saint. The church was, however, removed in the thirteenth century and was replaced by an open *loggia*, which was used for a corn market and store. In the following

century the open arches of the *loggia* were built up, again making a church of the building, in which a venerated Madonna, for which Orcagra made the tabernacle, was preserved. The companies and merchant guilds of Florence undertook to present statues to decorate the external niches of the building. Besides Donatello, Ghiberti, Verrochio, Gian Bologna and Nanni di Banco were employed; and there are also some admirable medallions by Luca della Robbia. Donatello made four statues—St. Peter, St. Mark, St. Louis and St. George. He was to have made St. Phillip as well, but the shoemakers who ordered the statue could not afford to pay Donatello's price and the work was entrusted to Nanni di Banco. Two only of Donatello's statues are left at Or San Michele, the St. Louis being now in Santa Croce, while the St. George has been placed in the Bargello. All these statues were put into niches of which the base is not more than eight feet from the ground, and being intended to be seen at a short distance are carved with greater attention to detail and finish than is the case with the prophets on the Campanile. St. Peter is probably the earliest in date, having been made, judging from stylistic grounds, between 1407 and 1412. This statue shows a doubt and hesitation which did not affect Donatello when making the little prophets for the Mandorla door. The head is commonplace and inexpressive; the pose is dull, and the drapery with its crimped edges ignores the right leg. There is, however, nothing blameworthy in the statue, but, on the other hand, there is nothing showing promise or deserving praise. Had it been made by one of the *macchinisti* of the time it would have lived in decent obscurity without provoking comment. In fact the statue does not owe its appearance in critical discussions to its

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OR SAN MICHELE

own merits, but to the later achievement of the sculptor. Thus only can one explain Bocchi's opinion that "living man could not display truer deportment than we find in the St. Peter."* One of the figures from the Cathedral façade now in the Louvre, an apostle or doctor of the Church, shows whence Donatello derived his prosy idea, though the St. Peter is treated in a less archaic manner. The St. Mark is much more successful: there is conviction as well as vigour and greater skill. Michael Angelo exclaimed that nobody could disbelieve the Gospel when preached by a saint whose countenance is honesty itself. The very drapery—*il prudente costume e religioso*—† was held to contribute to Michael Angelo's praise. The grave and kindly face, devout and holy, ‡ together with a certain homeliness of attitude, give the St. Mark a character which would endear him to all. He would not inspire awe like the St. John or indifference like St. Peter. He is a very simple, lovable person whose rebuke would be gentle and whose counsel would be wise. In 1408 the *Linaiuoli*, the guild of linen-weavers, gave their order to select the marble, and in 1411 the commission was given to Donatello, having been previously given to Niccolo d'Arezzo, who himself became one of Donatello's guarantors. The work had to be finished within eighteen months, and the heavy statue was to be placed in the niche at the sculptor's own risk. The statement made by Vasari that Brunellesco co-operated on the St. Mark is not borne out by the official documents. It is interesting to note that the guild gave Donatello the height of the figure, leaving him to select the corresponding proportions. The statue was to be gilded and

* Cinelli ed., p. 66. † Bocchi, 1765 ed., p. 128.

‡ *Spira il volto divozione e Santità*, Cinelli, p. 66.

decorated.* A further commission was given to two stone-masons for the niche, which was to be copied from that of Ghiberti's St. Stephen. These niches have been a good deal altered in recent times, and the statues are in consequence less suited to their environment than was formerly the case. Judging from the plates in Lasinio's book, the accuracy of which has not been contested, it appears that the niches of St. Eligius and St. Mark have been made more shallow, while the crozier of the former and the key in St. Peter's hand are not shown at all, and must be modern restorations.

St. Louis. The St. Louis is made of bronze. The reputation of this admirable figure has been prejudiced by a ridiculous bit of gossip seriously recorded by Vasari, to the effect that, having been reproached for making a clumsy figure, Donatello replied that he had done so with set purpose to mark the folly of the man who exchanged the crown for a friar's habit. Vasari had to enliven his biographies by anecdotes, and their authenticity was not always without reproach. In view of his immense services to the history of art one will gladly forgive these pleasantries; but it is deplorable when they are solemnly quoted as infallible. One author says: ". . . . *impossibile a guardare quel goffo e disgraziato San Lodovico senza sentire una stretta al cuore.*" This is preposterous. The statue has faults, but they do not spring from organic error. The Bishop is overweighted with his thick vestments, and his mitre is rather too broad for the head; the left hand, moreover, is big and Donatellesque. But the

* Gualandi, "Memorie," Series 4, p. 106.

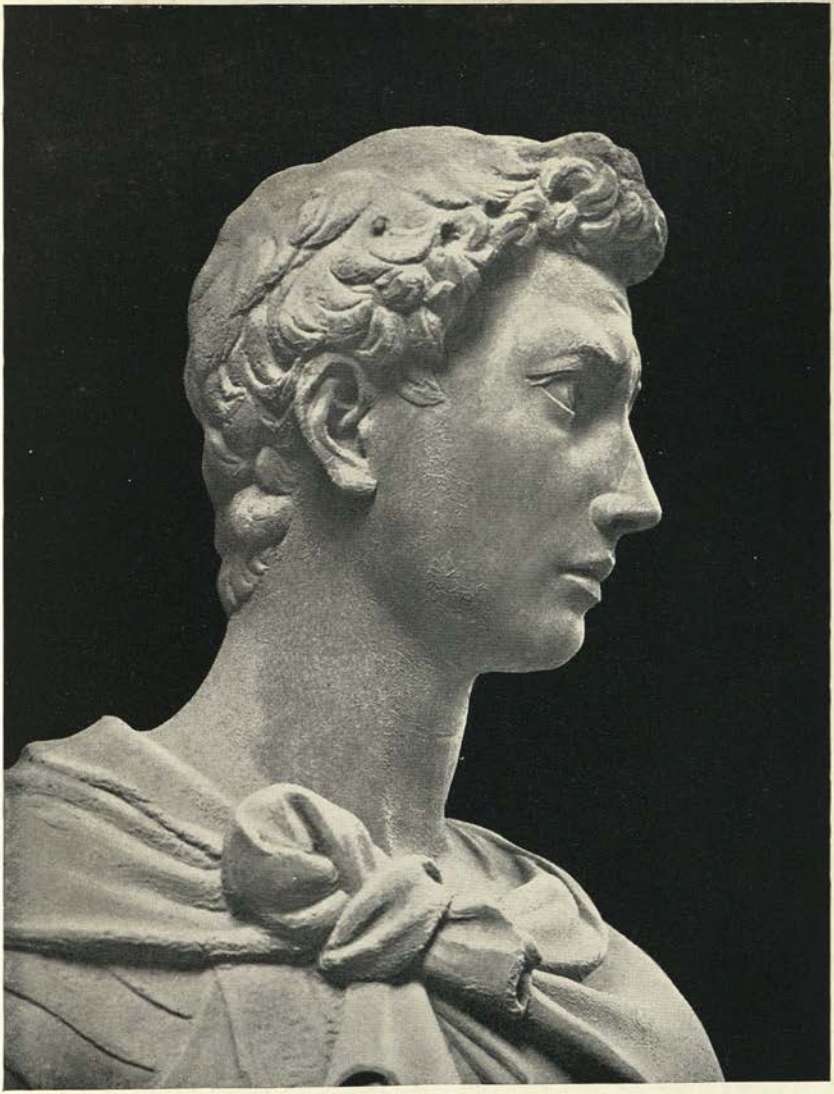
statue, now placed high above the great door of Santa Croce, is seen under most unfavourable conditions, and would look infinitely better in the low niche of Or San Michele. Its proportions would then appear less stumpy, and we would then be captivated by the beauty of the face. It has real "beauty"; the hackneyed and misused term can only be properly applied to Donatello's work in very rare cases, of which this is one. The face itself is taken from some model, which could be idealised to suit a definite conception, and in which the pure and symmetrical lines are harmonised with admirable feeling. Every feature is made to correspond, interrelated by some secret necessary to the art of portraiture. The broad brow and the calm eyes looking upwards are in relation with the delicately chiselled nose and mouth, while the right hand, which is outstretched in giving the blessing, is rendered with infinite sentiment and grace. St. Louis, in short, deserves high commendation, as, in spite of errors, it achieves something to which Donatello seldom aspired; and it has the further interest of being his earliest figure in bronze, a material in which some of his most renowned works were executed. The whole question of Donatello's share in the actual casting will be considered at a later stage. It will be enough to say at this point that the St. Louis, which was probably finished about 1425, was cast with the assistance of Michelozzo.

St. George. The St. George is the most famous of Donatello's statues, and is generally called his masterpiece. The marble original has now been taken into the Museum, and a bronze cast replaces it at Or San Michele. The cause

of this transfer is understood to be a fear that the statue would be ruined by exposure, although one would think that this would apply still more to the exquisite relief, which remains *in situ*, though unprotected by the niche. In the side-lighted Bargello, the St. George is crowded into a shallow niche (with plenty of highly correct detail) and is seen to the utmost disadvantage; but no incongruity of surroundings, no false relations of light can destroy the profound impression left by this statue, which was probably completed about 1416, in Donatello's thirtieth year. Vasari was enthusiastic in its praise. Bocchi wrote a whole book about it,* in which we might expect to find valuable information; but the interest of this ecstatic eulogy is limited. Bocchi gives no dates, facts or authorities; nothing to which modern students can turn for accurate or specific knowledge of Donatello. Cinelli says the St. George was held equal to the rarest sculpture of Rome,† and well it might be. The St. George was made for the Guild of Armourers; he is, of course, wearing armour, and the armour fits him, clothes him. It is not the clumsy inelastic stuff which must have prevented so many soldiers from moving a limb or mounting a horse. In this case the lithe and muscular frame is free and full of movement, quite unimpeded by the defensive plates of steel. He stands upright, his legs rather apart, and the shield in front of him, otherwise he is quite unarmed; the St. George in the niche is alert and watchful: in the bas-relief he manfully slays the dragon. The head is bare and the throat uncovered; the face is full of confidence and the pride of generous strength, but with no vanity or self-

* "Eccelenza della Statua del San Giorgio di Donatello," 1571.

† Bellezze, 1677, p. 67.



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consciousness. Fearless simplicity is his chief attribute, though in itself simplicity is no title to greatness: with Donatello, Sophocles and Dante would be excluded from any category of greatness based on simplicity alone. St. George has that earnest and outspoken simplicity with which the mediæval world invested its heroes; he springs from the chivalry of the early days of Christian martyrdom, the greatest period of Christian faith. Greek art had no crusader or knight-errant, and had to be content with Harmodius and Aristogeiton. Even the Perseus legend, which in so many ways reminds one of St. George, was far less appreciated as an incident by classical art than by the Renaissance; and even then not until patron and artist were growing tired of St. George. M. Reymond has pointed out the relation of Donatello's statue to its superb analogue, St. Theodore of Chartres Cathedral. "*C'est le souvenir de tout un monde qui disparaît.*"* Physically it may be so. The age of chivalry may be passed in so far that the prancing steed and captive Princess belong to remote times which may never recur. But St. George and St. Theodore were not merely born of legend and fairy tale; their spirit may survive in conditions which, although less romantic and picturesque, may still preserve intact the essential qualities of the soldier-saint of primitive times. The influence of the St. George upon contemporary art seems to have been small. The Mocenigo tomb, which has already been mentioned, has a figure on the sarcophagus obviously copied from the St. George; and elsewhere in this extremely curious example of plagiarism we find other figures suggested by Donatello's statues. The little figure in the Palazzo Publico at Pistoja is again

* "La Sculpture Florentine," vol. ii. p. 91.

an early bit of piracy. In the courtyard of the Palazzo Quaratesi in Florence, built by Brunellesco between 1425 and 1430, an early version of the head of St. George was placed in one of the circular panels above the pillars. It is without intrinsic importance, being probably a cast, but it shows how early the statue was appreciated. A more important cast is that of the bas-relief now in London, which has a special interest from having been taken before the original had suffered two or three rather grievous blows.* Verrochio made a drawing of the St. George,† and Mantegna introduced a similar figure into his picture of St. James being led to execution.‡ But Donatello's influence cannot be measured by the effect of St. George. In this particular case his work did not challenge competition; its perfection was too consummate to be of service except to the copyist. In some ways it spoke the last word; closed an episode in the history of art—*ἰσχατος τοῦ ἰδίου γένους.*

Donatello and Gothic Art. The relation of St. George and other Italian works of this period, both in sculpture and painting, to the Gothic art of France cannot be ignored, although no adequate explanation has yet been given. St. George, the Baptists of the Campanile and in Rome, and the marble David are intensely Franco-Gothic, and precisely what one would expect to find in France. The technical and physical resemblance between the two schools may, of course, be a coincidence; it may be purely superficial. But St. Theodore might well take his place

* Victoria and Albert Museum, 7607, 1861. † Uffizzi, frame 49.
‡ Eremitani, Padua, about 1448–50.

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outside Or San Michele, while the St. George (in spite of the difference in date) would be in complete ethical harmony with the statues on the portals of Chartres. Even if they cannot be analysed, the phenomena must be stated. Donatello may have spontaneously returned to the principles which underlay the creation of the great statuary of France, the country of all others where a tremendous school had flourished. But what these fundamental principles were it is impossible to determine. It is true there had always been agencies at work which must have familiarised Italy with French thought and ideas. From the time of the dominant French influence in Sicily down to the Papal exile in France—which ended actually while Donatello was working on these statues, one portion or another of the two countries had been frequently brought into contact. The Cistercians, for instance, had been among the most persistent propagators of Gothic architecture in Italy, though nearly all their churches (of which the ground-plans are sometimes identical with those of French buildings) are situated in remote country districts of Italy, and being inaccessible are little known or studied nowadays. France, however, was herself full of Italian teachers and churchmen, who may have brought back Northern ideas of art, for they certainly left small traces of their influence on the French until later on; their presence, at any rate, records intercourse between the two countries. A concrete example of the relation between the two national arts is afforded by the fact that Michelozzo was the son of a Burgundian who settled in Florence. Michelozzo was some years younger than Donatello, and it is therefore quite out of the question to assume that the St. George could have been due to his influence: he was too young to give

Donatello more than technical assistance. In this connection one must remember that French Gothic, though manifested in its architecture, was of deeper application, and did not confine its spirit to the statuary made for the tall elongated lines of its cathedrals. What we call Gothic pervaded everything, and was not solely based on physical forms. Indeed, whatever may be the debt of Italian sculpture to French influence, the Gothic architecture of Italy excluded some of the chief principles of the French builders. It was much more liberal and more fond of light and air. Speaking of the exaggerated type of Gothic architecture, in which everything is heightened and thinned, Renan asks what would have happened to Giotto if he had been told to paint his frescoes in churches from which flat spaces had entirely disappeared. "Once we have exhausted the grand idea of infinity which springs from its unity, we realise the shortcomings of this egoistic and jealous architecture, which only exists for itself and its own ends, *régnant dans le désert.*"* The churches of Umbria and Tuscany were as frames in which space was provided for all the arts; where fresco and sculpture could be welcomed with ample scope for their free and unencumbered display. Donatello was never hampered or crowded by the architecture of Florence; he was never obliged, like his predecessors in Picardy and Champagne, to accommodate the gesture and attitude of his statue to stereotyped positions dictated by the architect. His opportunity was proportionately greater, and it only serves to enhance our admiration for the French sculptors. In spite of difficulties not of their own making, they were able to create, with a coarser material and in a less favour-

* "Mélanges d'Histoire," p. 248.

able climate, what was perhaps the highest achievement ever attained by monumental sculpture. The Italians soon came to distrust Gothic architecture. It was never quite indigenous, and they were afraid of this "German" transalpine art. Vasari attacks "*Questa maledizione di fabbriche*," with their "*tabernacolini l'un sopra l'altro, . . . che hanno ammorbato il mondo.*"* One would expect the denunciation of Milizia to be still more severe. But he admits that "*fra tante monstruosità l'architettura gottica ha alcune bellezze.*"† Elsewhere mentioning the architect of the Florentine Cathedral (while regretting how long the *corrotto gusto* survived), he says, "*In questo architetto si vede qualche barlume di buona architettura, come di pittura in Cimabue suo contemporaneo.*"‡ He detects some glimmer of good architecture. Sir Joshua Reynolds was cautious: "Under the rudeness of Gothic essays, the artist will find original, rational, and even sublime inventions."§ It should be remembered that the word *Tedesca*, as applied to Gothic art, meant more than German, and could be almost translated by Northern. Italians from the lakes and the Valtellina were called *Tedeschi*, and Italy herself was inhabited by different peoples who were constantly at war, and who did not always understand each other's dialects. Dante said the number of variations was countless.‖ Alberti, who lived north of the Apennines during his boyhood, took lessons in Tuscan before returning to Florence. The word *Forestiere*, now meaning foreigner, was applied

* Introduction, i. 122.

† "Vita de' Architetti," 53.

‡ *Ibid.* 151.

§ "Discourses," 1778, p. 237.

‖ "Qua propter si primas et secundarias et subsecundarias vulgaris Ytalie variationes calculare velimus, in hoc minimo mundi angulo, non solum ad millenam loquele variationem venire contigerit, sed etiam at magis ultra."—De Vulg. Eloq. Lib., I., cap. x. § 8.

in those days to people living outside the province, sometimes even to those living outside the town. Thus we have a record of the cost of making a provisional altar to display Donatello's work at Padua—"*per demonstrar el desegno ai forestieri.*"* No final definition of Gothic art, of the *maniera tedesca* is possible. Some of its component parts have been enumerated: rigidity, grotesque, naturalism, and so forth; but the definition is incomplete, cataloguing the effects without analysing their cause. Whether Donatello was influenced by the ultimate cause or not, he certainly assimilated some of the effects. The most obvious example of the Gothic feeling which permeated this child of the Renaissance, is his naturalistic portrait-statues. Donatello found the form, some passing face or figure in the street, and rapidly impressed it with his ideal. Raffaelle found his ideal, and waited for the bodily form wherewith to clothe it. "In the absence of good judges and handsome women"—that is to say, models, he paused, as he said in one of his letters to Castiglione. One feels instinctively that with his Gothic bias Donatello would not have minded. He did not ask for applause, and at the period of St. George classical ideas had not introduced the professional artist's model. Life was still adequate, and the only model was the subject in hand. The increasing discovery of classical statuary and learning made the later sculptors distrust their own interpretation of the bodily form, which varied from the primitive examples. Thus they lost conviction, believing the ideal of the classicals to surpass the real of their own day. The result was Bandinelli and Montorsoli, whose world was inhabited by pompous fictions. They neither attained the

* 23, iv. 1448.

high character of the great classical artists nor the single-minded purpose of Donatello. Their ideal was based on the unrealities of the Baroque.

The Crucifix and Annunciation.

Donatello loved to characterise: in one respect only did he typify. Where there was most character there was often least beauty. This is illustrated by two works in Santa Croce, the Christ on the Cross and the Annunciation. They differ in date, material, and conception, but may be considered together. As to the exact date of the former many opinions have been expressed. Vasari places it about 1401, Manetti about 1405, Schmarsow 1410, Cavalucci 1416, Bode 1431, Marcel Reymond 1430–40. It is quite obvious that the crucifix is the product of rather a timid and uncertain technique, and does not show the verve and decision which Donatello acquired so soon. It is made of olive wood, and is covered by a shiny brown paint which may conceal a good deal of detailed carving. The work is sober and decorous, and not marred by any breach of good taste. It is in no sense remarkable, and has nothing special to connect it with Donatello. Its notoriety springs from a long and rather inconsequent story, which says that, having made his Christ in rivalry with Brunellesco, who was occupied on a similar work, Donatello was so much saddened at the superiority of the other crucifix that he exclaimed: "You make the Christ while I can only make a peasant: *a te è conceduto fare i Cristi, ed a me i contadini.** Brunellesco's crucifix,† now hidden behind a portentous array of candles, is even

* Vasari, iii. 247.

† In the Capella Gondi, Santa Maria Novella.

less attractive than that in Santa Croce. Brunellesco was the aristocrat, the builder of haughty palaces for haughty men, and may have really thought his cold and correct idea superior to Donatello's peasant. To have thought of taking a contadino for his type (disappointing as it was to Donatello) was in itself a suggestive and far-reaching departure from the earlier treatment of the subject. In the fourteenth century Christ on the Cross had been treated with more reserve and in a less naturalistic fashion. The traditional idea disappeared after these two Christs, which are among the earliest of their kind, afterwards produced all over Italy in such numbers. As time went on the figure of Christ received more emphasis, until it became the vehicle for exhibiting those painful aspects of death from which no divine message of resurrection could be inferred. The big crucifix ascribed to Michelozzo shows how far exaggeration could be carried.* The opened mouth, the piteous expression, the clots of blood falling from the wounds, combine to make a figure which is repellent, and which lost all justification, from the fact that this tortured dying man shows no conviction of divine life to come. Donatello's bronze crucifix at Padua, made years afterwards, showed that he never forgot that a dying Christ must retain to the last the impress of power and superhuman origin. In the conflict of drama and beauty, Donatello allowed drama to gain the upper hand. But the Annunciation would suggest a different answer, for here we find what is clearly a sustained effort to secure beauty. The Annunciation is a large relief, in which the angel and the Virgin are placed within an elaborately carved frame, while on the cornice above there are six

* In San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice.

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ANNUNCIATION

SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE

children holding garlands. Its date has been the subject of even more discussion than that of the Crucifix,* and the conflict of opinion has been so keen that the intrinsic merits of this remarkable work have been sometimes overlooked. The date is, of course, important for the classification of Donatello's work, but it is a pity when the attention of the critic is monopolised by minor problems. Milizia, when in doubt about the date of Alberti's birth, did not go too far in saying "*disgrazia grande per chi si trovà la sua felicità nelle date.*" The Annunciation was erected by the Cavalcanti family, and the old theory that it was ordered to commemorate their share in the victory over Pisa in 1406 has been upheld by the presence on the lower frieze of a winged wreath, an emblem of victory. The object of the donor is conjectural: we know nothing about it; and the association of wings and a wreath is found elsewhere in Donatello's work.† Moreover, the rich Renaissance decoration is quite sufficient to demonstrate that the work must be much later than 1406, though whether immediately before or after the second Roman visit must be founded on hypothesis. The precise date of the particular decoration is too nebular to permit any exact statement on the subject. There was never any line of demarcation between one school and another. One can find Gothic ideas long after the Renaissance had established its principles,‡ while

* Borghini, Donatello's earliest work. Semper, 1406. Schmarsow, 1412. Bode, before the second journey to Rome in 1433. Reymond, 1435.

† *E.g.*, on the Or San Michele niche, round the Trinity. Verrochio also used it on his sketch model for the Forteguerri tomb, Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7599, 1861.

‡ *E.g.*, Pacifico tomb about 1438 and the Francesco Foscari tomb about 1457, both in the Frari.

the period of transition lasted so long, especially in the smaller towns, that the old and new schools often flourished concurrently. This relief is made of Pietra Serena, of a delicate bluish tint, very charming to work in, according to Cellini, though without the durability needed for statues placed out of doors.* It has been enriched with a most lavish hand and there is no part of the work without sumptuous decoration. The base, with the central wreath, is flanked by the Cavalcanti arms: above them rise two rectangular shafts enclosing the relief on either side. These columns are carved with a fretwork of leaves, and their capitals are formed of strongly chiselled masks of a classical type, like those on the Or San Michele niche. Above the shafts comes the plinth, which has a peculiar egg and dart moulding, in its way ugly, and finally the whole thing is crowned with a bow-shaped arch, upon which the six terra cotta *Putti* are placed, two at either extremity and the other pair lying along the curved space in the centre ;† the panelled background and the throne are covered with arabesques. But this intricate wealth of decoration does not distract attention from the main figures. The Virgin has just risen from the chair, part of her dress still resting on the seat. Her face and feet turn in different directions, thus giving a dualism to the movement, an impression of surprise which is in itself a *tour de force.* But there is nothing bizarre or far-fetched, and the general idea one receives is that we have a momentary vision of the scene: we intercept the message which is well rendered by the pose

* "Due Trattati di Benvenuto Cellini," ed. Carlo Milanesi, 1857. Ch. 6 on marble.

† *Cf. Putti* on the Roman Tabernacle.

of the angel, while its reception is acknowleged by the startled gesture of the Virgin. "*E stupendo l'artifizio.** The scheme is what one would expect from Luca della Robbia. Nothing of the kind reappears in Donatello's work, and the attainment of beauty as such is also beyond the sphere of his usual ambition. Indeed, so widely does the Annunciation differ from our notions about the artist, that it has been recently suggested that Donatello was assisted in the work: while some people doubt the attribution altogether. The idea that Michelozzo should have done some of the actual carving may be well or ill founded; in any case, no tangible argument has been advanced to support the idea. Donatello's authorship is vouched for by Albertini, who wrote long before Vasari, and whose notice about the works of art in Florence is of great value.† But we have no standard of comparison, and Donatello himself had to strike out a new line for his new theme. The internal evidence in favour of Donatello must therefore be sought in the accessories; and in architectural details which occur elsewhere,‡ such as the big and somewhat incontinent hands, the typical *putti*, and the rather heavy drapery. To this we may add the authority of early tradition, the originality and strength of treatment, and finally the practical impossibility of suggesting any alternative sculptor.

* Bocchi, p. 316.

† "Memoriale di molte statue e pitture della città di Firenze," 1510.

‡ Or San Michele niche, San Lorenzo Evangelists.

Martelli, David and Donatello's Technique.

Tradition says that Ruberto Martelli was the earliest of Donatello's patrons. So far as we know, there were two Rubertos: the elder was seventy-three at the time of Donatello's birth, and must therefore have been a nonagenarian before his patronage could be effectively exercised; the other was twenty-two years younger than the sculptor, whom he could not have helped as a young man. But there is no question about the interest shown by the family in Donatello's work. The David and the St. John, together with a portrait-bust and the coat of arms, still show their practical appreciation of his work and Donatello's gratitude to the family. Vasari is the first to mention these works, and it must be remarked that Albertini, who paid great attention to Donatello, mentions nothing but antique sculpture in the Martelli palace. The David and the St. John Baptist are both in marble, and were probably made between 1415 and 1425. The David, which was always prized by the family, is shown in the background of Bronzino's portrait of Ugolino Martelli.* It was then standing in the courtyard of the palace, but was taken indoors in 1802 *per intemperias*. The statue is not altogether a success. Its *allure* is good: but the anatomy is feminine, the type is soft and yielding; the attitude is not spontaneous; and the head of Goliath, tucked uncomfortable between the feet, is poor. There is a bronze statuette in Berlin which has been considered a study for this figure, though it is most unlikely that Donatello himself would have taken the trouble to make bronze versions of his preparatory studies. The work, however, is in all probability by Donatello, and most of the faults in the marble statue

* In the Berlin Gallery.

being corrected, it may be later than the Martelli figure, from which it also varies in several particulars. The statuette is full of life and vigour, and the David is a sturdy shepherd-boy who might well engage a lion or a bear. In one respect the Martelli figure is of great importance. It is unfinished—the only unfinished marble we have of the master, and it gives an insight into the methods he employed. It is fortunate that we have some means of understanding how Donatello gained his ends, although this statue does not show him at his best; indeed it may have been abandoned because it did not reach his expectations. However, we have nothing else to judge by. The first criticism suggested by the David is that Donatello betrays the great effort it cost him. Like the unfinished Faith by Mino da Fiesole,* it is laboured and experimental. They set to work hoping that later stages would enable them to rectify any error or miscalculation, but both found they had gone too far. The material would permit no such thing, and with all their skill one sees that the blocks of marble did not unfold the statues which lay hidden within. As hewers of stone, Donatello and Mino cannot compare with Michael Angelo. Jacopo della Quercia alone had something of his genius of material. Nobody left more "unfinished" work than Michael Angelo. The Victory, the bust of Brutus, the Madonna and Child,† to mention a few out of many, show clearly what his system was. In the statue of Victory we see the three stages of development or completion. The statue is *in* the stone, grows out of it. The marble seems to be as soft as soap, and Michael Angelo simply peels off successive strata, apparently

* Berlin Museum. † All three in Bargello.

extracting a statue without the smallest effort. The three grades are respectively shown in the rough-hewn head of the crouching figure, then in the head of the triumphant youth above him, finally in his completed torso. But each stage is finished relatively. Completion is relative to distance; the Brutus is finished or unfinished according to our standpoint, physical or æsthetic. Moreover, the treatment is not partial or piecemeal; the statue was in the marble from the beginning, and is an entity from its initial stage: in many ways each stage is equally fine. The paradox of Michael Angelo's technique is that his *abozzo* is really a finished study. The Victory also shows how the deep folds of drapery are bored preparatory to being carved, in order that the chisel might meet less resistance in the narrow spaces; this is also the case in the Martelli David. As a technical adjunct boring was very useful, but only as a process. When employed as a mechanical device to represent the hair of the head, we get the Roman Empress disguised as a sponge or a honeycomb. These tricks reveal much more than pure technicalities of art. Gainsborough's habit of using paint brushes four or five feet long throws a flood of light upon theory and practice alike. There is, however, another work, possibly by Donatello himself, which gives no insight into anything but technical methods, but which is none the less important. This is the large Madonna and Child surrounded by angels, belonging to Signor Bardini of Florence. It is unhappily a complete wreck, five heads, including the Child's, having been broken away. It is a relief in stucco, modelled, not cast, and is closely allied with a group of Madonnas to which reference is made hereafter.* We can see precisely how this relief was made.

* See p. 185.

The stucco adheres to a strong canvas, which in its turn is nailed on to a wooden panel. The background, also much injured, is decorated with mosaic and geometrical patterns of glass, now dim and opaque with age. The relief must have been of signal merit. Complete it would have rivalled the polychrome Madonna of the Louvre: as a fragment it is quite sufficient to prove that the Piot Madonna, in the same museum, is not authentic. One more trick of the sculptor remains to be noticed. Vasari and Bocchi say that Donatello, recognising the value of his work, grouped his figures so that the limbs and drapery should offer few protruding angles, in order to minimise the danger of fracture. It was his insurance against the fragility of the stone: when working in bronze such precautions would be less necessary. It is quite true that in the larger figures there is a marked restraint in this respect, while in his bas-reliefs, where the danger was less, the tendency to raise the arms above the head is often exaggerated. But too much stress should not be laid upon this explanation: it is hard to believe that Donatello would have let so crucial a matter be governed by such a consideration. Speaking generally, Donatello was neither more nor less restrictive than his Florentine contemporaries, and it was only at a later period that the isolated statue received perfect freedom, such as that in the Cellini Perseus, or the Mercury by Gian Bologna, or Bernini's work in marble.

Early Figures of St. John.

Another important statue in the Martelli palace is that of St. John the Baptist. Besides being the earliest patron of Florence, St. John was the titular saint of every Baptistery in the land. This accounts for the frequency with which we find his statues and scenes from his life, particularly in Tuscany. With Donatello he was to some extent a speciality, and we can almost trace the sculptor's evolution in his presentment of the Baptist, beginning with the chivalrous figure on the Campanile and ending with the haggard ascetic of Venice. We have St. John as a child in the Bargello, as a boy in Rome, as a stripling in the Martelli palace. On the bell-tower he is grown up, in the Frari he is growing older, and at Siena he is shown as old as Biblical history would permit. The St. John in the Casa Martelli, *oltra tutti singolare*,* was so highly prized that it was made an heirloom, with penalties for such members of the family who disposed of it. This St. John is a link between the Giovannino and the mature prophet. He is, as it were, dazed, and sets forth upon his errand with open-mouthed wonder. He has a strain of melancholy, and seems rather weakly and hesitating. But there is no attempt after emaciation. The limbs are well made, and as sturdy as one would expect, in view of the unformed lines of the model: the hands also are good. As regards the face, one notices that the nose and mouth are rather crooked, and that the eyes diverge: not, indeed, that these defects are really displeasing, since they are what one sometimes finds in living youth. Another Baptist which has hitherto

* Bocchi, 23. Like the David, it used to live out of doors, until in 1755 Nicolaus Martelli "in aedes suas transtulit." Its base dates from 1794.

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SAN GIOVANNINO

PALAZZO MARTELLI, FLORENCE

escaped attention is the small marble figure, about four feet high, which stands in a niche over the sacristy door of San Giovanni Fiorentino in Rome. It was placed there a few years ago, when, owing to the prevalent mania of rebuilding, it became necessary to demolish the little oratory on the Corso which belonged to the Mother Church close by. The statue was scarcely seen in its old home: how it got there is unknown. The church itself was not founded by the Florentines until after Donatello's death, and this statue looks as if it had been made before Donatello's visit to Rome in 1433. But its authenticity cannot be questioned. We have the same type as in the Martelli Baptist, with something of the Franco-Gothic sentiment. This St. John is rather younger, a Giovannino, his thin lithe figure draped with the camel-hair tunic which ends above the knees. Hanging over the left shoulder is a long piece of drapery, falling to the ground behind him, and giving support to the marble, just as in the other Baptist. We have the open mouth, the curly hair and the broad nostrils: in every way it is a typical work of the sculptor. There are two other early Baptists, both in the Bargello. The little relief in Pietra Serena* is a delightful rendering of gentle boyhood. The modelling shows Donatello's masterful treatment of the soft flesh and the tender muscles beneath it. Everything is subordinated to his object of showing real boyhood with all the charm of its imperfections. The head is shown in profile, thus enabling us to judge the precise nature of all the features, each one of which bears the imprint of callow *morbidezza*.

* It was acquired for nine zechins in 1784. Madame André has a version in stucco, on rather a larger scale. A marble version from the Strawberry Hill Collection now belongs to Sir Charles Dilke, M.P.

Even the hair has the dainty qualities of childhood: it has the texture of silk. It is a striking contrast to the life-sized Baptist who has just reached manhood. We see a St. John walking out into the desert. He looks downward to the scroll in his hand, trudging forward with a hesitating gait,—but only hesitating because he is not sure of his foothold, so deeply is he absorbed in reading. It is a triumph of concentration. Donatello has enlisted every agency that could intensify the oblivion of the world around him. It is from this aloofness that the figure leaves a detached and inhospitable impression. One feels instinctively that this St. John would be friendless, for he has nothing to offer, and asks no sympathy. There is no room for anybody else in his career, and nobody can share his labours or mitigate his privations. In short, there is no link between him and the spectator. Unless we interpret the statue in this manner, it loses all interest—it never had any beauty—and the St. John becomes a tiresome person with a pedantic and ill-balanced mind. But Donatello can only have meant to teach the lesson of concentrated unity of purpose, which is the chief if not the only characteristic of this St. John. Technically the work is admirable. The singular care with which the limbs are modelled, especially the feet and hands, is noteworthy: while the muscular system, the prominent spinal cord, and the pectoral bones are rendered with an exactitude which leads one to suppose Donatello reproduced all the peculiarities of his model. It has been said that Michelozzo helped Donatello on the ground that certain details reappear on the Aragazzi monument. The argument is speculative, and would perhaps gain by being inverted,—by pointing out that when making the Aragazzi

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ST. JOHN BAPTIST, MARBLE

BARGELLO

figures, Michelozzo, the lesser man, was influenced by Donatello, the greater.

Donatello as Architect and Painter.

Fully as Donatello realised the unity of the arts, we cannot claim him as a universal genius, like Leonardo or Michael Angelo, who combined the art of literature with plastic, pictorial and architectural distinction. But at the same time Donatello did not confine himself to sculpture. He was a member of the Guild of St. Luke: he designed a stained-glass window for the Cathedral: his opinion on building the Cupola was constantly invited, and he made a number of marble works, such as niches, fountains, galleries and tombs, into which the pursuit of architecture and construction was bound to enter. Moreover, his backgrounds were usually suggested by architectural motives. Donatello joined the painters' guild of St. Luke in 1412, and in a document of this year he is called *Pictor*.* There is a great variety in the names and qualifications given to artists during the fifteenth century. In the first edition of the Lives, Vasari calls Ghiberti a painter. Pisano, the medallist, signed himself Pictor. *Lastrajuolo*, or stone-fitter, is applied to Nanni di Banco.† Giovanni Nani was called *Tagliapietra*,‡ Donatello is also called *Marmoraio*, *picchiapietre*,§ and woodcarver.‖ In the commission from the Orvieto Cathedral for a bronze Baptist he is comprehensively described as "*intagliatorem figurarum*,

* Domopera archives, 12, viii., 1412. † *Ibid.*, 31, xii., 1407.
‡ Padua, 3, iv., 1443.
§ When working at Pisa in 1427. See Centofanti, p. 4.
‖ Commission for bronze Baptist for Ancona, 1422.

magistrum lapidum atque intagliatorem figurarum in ligno et eximium, magistrum omnium trajectorum." * Finally, like Ciuffagni,† he is called *aurifex*, goldsmith.‡ Cellini mentions Donatello's success in painting,§ and Gauricus, who wrote early in the sixteenth century, says that the favourite maxim inculcated by Donatello to his pupils was "*designate*"—"Draw: that is the whole foundation of sculpture."‖ The only pictorial work that has survived is the great stained-glass Coronation of the Virgin in the Duomo. Ghiberti submitted a competitive cartoon and the Domopera had to settle which was "*pulchrius et honorabilius pro ecclesia.*" Donatello's design was accepted,¶ and the actual glazing was carried out by Bernardo Francesco in eighteen months.** The background is a plain blue sky, and the two great figures are the centre of a warm and harmonious composition. The window stands well among its fellows as regards colour and design, but does not help us to solve difficult problems connected with Donatello's drawings. Numbers have been attributed to him on insufficient foundation.†† The fact is that, notwith-

* Contract in Orvieto archives, 10, ii., 1423.

† Domopera, 2, ix., 1429. ‡ *Ibid.* 18, iii., 1426.

§ "Due Trattati," ch. xii.

‖ Pomponius Gauricus, "De Sculptura," 1504, p. b, iii.

¶ April 1434. ** See *American Journal of Arch.*, June 1900.

†† The so-called St. George in the Royal Library at Windsor has been determined by Mr. R. Holmes to be Perugino's study for the St. Michael in the National Gallery triptych. In the Uffizzi several pen-and-ink drawings are attributed to Donatello. The four eagles, the group of three peasants, the two figures seen from behind (Frame 5, No. 181), and the candlestick (Frame 7, No. 61 s.), are nondescript studies in which no specific sign of Donatello appears. The five winged *Putti* (Frame 7, No. 40 f.) and the two studies of the Madonna (Frame 7, No. 38 f.) are more Donatellesque, but they show the niggling touch of some draughtsman who tried to make a sketch by

standing the explicit statements of Borghini and Vasari that Donatello and Michael Angelo were comparable in draughtsmanship, we have no authenticated work through which to make our inductions. A large and important scene of the Flagellation in the Uffizzi,* placed within a complicated architectural framework, and painted in green wash, has some later Renaissance features, but recalls Donatello's compositions. In the same collection are two extremely curious pen-and-ink drawings which give variants of Donatello's tomb of John XXIII. in the Baptistery. The first of them (No. 660) shows the Pope in his tiara, whereas on the tomb this symbol of the Papacy occupies a subordinate place. The Charity below carries children, another variant from the tomb itself. The second study (No. 661) gives the effigy of a bareheaded knight in full armour lying to the left, and the basal figures also differ from those on the actual tomb. These drawings are certainly of the fifteenth century, and even if not directly traceable to Donatello himself, are important from their relation to the

mere indications with his pen. There is also a study in brown wash of the Baptistery Magdalen: probably made from, and not for, the statue. The Louvre has an ink sketch (No. 2225, Reynolds and His De la Salle Collections) of the three Maries at the Tomb, or perhaps a fragment of a Crucifixion, with a fourth figure, cowled like a monk. It is a gaunt composition, made with very strong lines. It may be noted that the eyes are roughly suggested by circles, a mannerism which recurs in several drawings ascribed to Donatello. This was also a trick of Baldassare Peruzzi (Sketch-Book, Siena Library, p. 13, &c.). In the British Museum there is an Apostle holding a book (No. 1860, 6. 13. 31), with a Donatellesque hand and forearm; also a Lamentation over the dead Christ (No. 1862, 7. 2. 189). Both are interesting drawings, but the positive evidence of Donatello's authorship is *nil*. Mr. Gathorne Hardy's drawing, which has been ascribed to Donatello, is really by Mantegna, a capital study for one of the frescoes in the Eremitani.

* Uffizzi, Frame 6, No. 6347 f.

great tomb of the Pope, for which Donatello was responsible. But we have no right to say that even these are Donatello's own work. In fact, drawings on paper by Donatello would seem inherently improbable. Although he almost drew in marble when working in *stiacciato*, the lowest kind of relief, he was essentially a modeller, rather than a draughtsman. Leonardo was just the reverse; Michael Angelo was both, but with him sculpture was *the* art. Donatello had small sense of surface or silhouette, and we would not expect him to commit his ideas to paper, just as Nollekens,* who drew so badly that he finally gave up drawing, and limited himself to modelling instead—turning the clay round and round and observing it from different aspects, thus employing a tactile in place of a pictorial medium. Canova also trusted chiefly to the plastic sense to create the form. But Donatello must nevertheless have used pen and ink to sketch the tombs, the galleries, the Roman tabernacle, and similar works. It is unfortunate that none of his studies can be identified. There is, however, one genuine sketch by Donatello, but it is a sketch in clay. The London Panel † was made late in life, when Donatello left a considerable share to his assistants. It is therefore a valuable document, showing Donatello's system as regards his own preliminary studies and the amount of finishing he would leave to pupils. We see his astonishing plastic facility, and the ease with which he could improvise by a few curves, depressions and prominences so complex a theme as the

* See Life by J. T. Smith, 1828.

† Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7619, 1861. This sketch, which appears to have been made for the Forzori family, has been mistaken for a study for the San Lorenzo pulpit.

CLAY SKETCH OF CRUCIFIXION AND FLAGELLATION

LONDON

Flagellation, or Christ on the Cross. It is a marvel of dexterity.

Sculpture relies upon the contour, architecture upon the line. The distinction is vital, and were it not for the number and importance of the exceptions, from Michael Angelo down to Alfred Stevens, one would think that the sculptor-architect would be an anomaly. In describing the pursuits of Donatello and Brunellesco during their first visit to Rome, Manetti says that the former was engrossed by his plastic researches, "*senza mai aprire gli occhi alla architettura.*" It is difficult to believe that Donatello had no eyes for architecture. There are several reasons to show that later on he gave some attention to its study. Like the Roman Tabernacle, the Niche on Or San Michele * is without any Gothic details. Albertini mentions Donatello as its sole author, but it is probable that Michelozzo, who helped on the statue of St. Louis, was also associated with its niche. It is a notable work, designed without much regard to harmony between various orders of architecture, but making a very rich and pleasing whole. It is decorated with some admirable reliefs. On the base are winged *putti* carrying a wreath; in the spandrils above the arch are two more. The upper frieze has also winged cherubs' heads, six of them with swags of fruit and foliage, all of exceptional charm and vivacity. The motive of wings recurs in the large triangular space at the top; flanking the magnificent Trinity, three grave and majestic heads, which though

* The niche was completed about 1424–5. There is a drawing of it in Vettorio Ghiberti's Note-book, p. 70. Landucci, in his "Diario Fiorentino," says that Verrochio's group was placed in it on June 21, 1483.

united are kept distinct, and though similar in type are full of individual character. This little relief, placed rather high, and discountenanced by the bronze group below, is a memorable achievement of the early fifteenth century and heralds the advent of the power and solemnity, the *Terribilità* of Michael Angelo. Donatello's aptitude for architectural setting is also illustrated by the choristers' galleries in the Cathedral and San Lorenzo. The former must be dealt with in detail when considering Donatello's treatment of childhood. As an architectural work it shows how the sculptor employed decorative adjuncts such as mosaic and majolica * to set off the white marble; he also added deep maroon slabs of porphyry and bronze heads, thus combining various arts and materials. Having no sculpture, the Cantoria of San Lorenzo is perhaps more important in this connection, as it is purely constructive, while its condition is intact: the Cathedral gallery having been rebuilt on rather conjectural lines. In San Lorenzo we find the same ideas and peculiarities, such as the odd egg and dart moulding which reappears on the Annunciation. The colour effects are obtained by porphyry and inlaid marbles. But we see how much Donatello trusted to sculpture, and how indifferently he fared without it. This gallery does not retain one's attention. There is a stiffness about it, almost a monotony, and it looks more like the fragment of a balcony than a *Cantoria*, for there is no marked terminal motive to complete and enclose it at either end. Two gateways have been ascribed to Donatello, but there is nothing either in their architecture or the treatment of their heraldic decoration, which is

* *Cf.* Payments to Andrea Moscatello, for painted and glazed terracotta for the Paduan altar, May 1449.

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NICHE OF OR SAN MICHELE

THE GROUP BY VERROCCHIO

distinctive of the sculptor.* There can be no doubt that Donatello was employed as architect by the Chapter of Sant' Antonio at Padua,† and his love of buildings is constantly shown in the background of his reliefs. But the strongest testimony to his architectural skill is derived from the fact that he was commissioned in 1416 to make a model for the then unfinished cupola of the Cathedral at Florence. Brunellesco and Nanni di Banco also received similar orders. Brunellesco alone understood the immense difficulty of the task, and in the next year he announced his return to Rome for further research. In 1418 the sum of two hundred gold florins was offered for the best model, and in 1419 Ghiberti, Nanni di Banco, Donatello and Brunellesco all received payments for models. Donatello's was made of brick. Ultimately the work was entrusted to Brunellesco, who overcame the ignorance and intrigues which he encountered from all sides, his two staunch friends being Donatello and Luca della Robbia. As to the nature of Donatello's models we know nothing; it is, however, clear that his opinion was at one time considered among the best available on a problem which required knowledge of engineering. As a military engineer Donatello was a failure. He was sent in 1429 with other artists to construct a huge dam outside the besieged town of Lucca, in order to flood or isolate the city. The amateur and *dilettante* of the Renaissance found a rare opportunity in warfare; and this passion for war and its preparations

* From the Residenza dell' arte degli Albergatori, and that of the Rigattieri of Florence, figured on plates xii. and xv. of Carocci's "Ricordi del Mercato Vecchio," 1887.

† *Cf.* Payments for work on "*Archi de la balconà de lo lavoriero de la +*," *i.e.*, the crociera of the church, March 30 and April 11, 1444.

occurs frequently among these early artists. Leonardo designed scores of military engines. Francesco di Giorgio has left a whole bookful of such sketches, in one of which he anticipates the torpedo-boat.* So, too, Michael Angelo took his share in erecting fortifications, though he did not fritter away so much time on experiments as some of his contemporaries. Donatello and his colleagues did not even leave us plans to compensate for their ignominious failure. One is struck by the confidence of these Renaissance people, not only in art but in every walk of life. They were so sure of success, that failure came to be regarded as surprising, and very unprofessional. Michael Angelo had no conception of possible failure. He embarked upon the colossal statue of the Pope when quite inexperienced in casting; he was the first to taunt Leonardo on his failure to make the equestrian statue. When somebody failed, the work was handed over to another man, who was expected to succeed. Thus Ciuffagni had to abandon an unpromising statue, *quod male et inepte ipsam laboravit*,† and the David of Michael Angelo was made from a block of marble upon which Agostino di Duccio had already made fruitless attempts.

Two fountains are ascribed to Donatello, made respectively for the Pazzi and Medici families. The former now belongs to Signor Bardini. It is a fine bold thing, but the figure and centrepiece are unfortunately missing, The marble is coated with the delicate patina of water: its decoration is rather nondescript, but there is no reason to suppose that Rossellino's *fonte* mentioned by Albertini was the only one possessed by the Great House of the Pazzi. The Medici fountain, now in the Pitti Palace, is

* Siena Library. † Domopera, 7, vii. 1433.

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THE MARZOCCO

BARGELLO

rather larger, being nearly eight feet high. The decoration is opulent, and one could not date these florid ideas before Donatello's later years. The boy at the top dragging along a swan is Donatellesque, but with mannerisms to which we are unaccustomed. The work is not convincing as regards his authorship. The marble Lavabo in the sacristy of San Lorenzo is also a doubtful piece of sculpture. It has been attributed to Verrochio, Donatello and Rossellino. It has least affinity to Donatello. The detailed attention paid by the sculptor to the floral decoration, and the fussy manner in which the whole thing is overcrowded, as if the artist were afraid of simplicity, suggest the hand of Rossellino, to whom Albertini, the first writer on the subject, has ascribed it. Donatello made the Marzocco, the emblematic Lion of the Florentines, and it has therefore been assumed that he also made its marble pedestal. This is held to be contemporary with the niche of Or San Michele. So far as the architectural and decorative lines are concerned this is not impossible, though the early Renaissance motives long retained their popularity. There is, however, one detail showing that the base must be at least twenty-five years older than the niche. The arms of the various quarters of Florence are carved upon the frieze of the base. Among these shields we notice one bearing "on a field semée of fleurs-de-lys, a label, above all a bendlet dexter." These are not Italian arms. They were granted in 1452 to Jean, Comte de Dunois, an illegitimate son of the Duc d'Orléans. His coat had previously borne the bendlet sinister, but this was officially turned into a bendlet dexter, to show that the King had been pleased to legitimise him in recognition of his services to Joan of Arc. Jean was a contemporary

of Donatello, and the coat may have been placed among the other shields as a compliment to France. Certainly no quarter of a town could use a mark of cadency below a bendlet, and Florence was more careful than most Italian towns to be precise in her heraldry. Numbers of stone shields bearing the arms of Florentine families were placed upon the palace walls. When high up and protected by the broad eaves they have survived; but, as a rule, those which were exposed to the weather, carved as they usually were in soft stone, have perished.* Bocchi mentions that Donatello made coats-of-arms for the Becchi, the Boni and the Pazzi. Others have been ascribed to him, namely, the Stemma of the Arte della Seta, from the Via di Capaccio, that on the Gianfigliazzi Palace, the shield inside the courtyard of the Palazzo Davanzati, and that on the Palazzo Quaratesi, all in Florence. These have been much repaired, and in some cases almost entirely renewed. The shield on the eastern side of the old Martelli Palace (in the Via de' Martelli, No. 9) is, perhaps, coeval with Donatello, but it is insignificant beside the shield preserved inside the present palace. This coat-of-arms, which is coloured according to the correct metals and tinctures, is one of the finest extant specimens of decorative heraldry. It is a winged griffin rampant, with the tail and hindlegs of a lion. The shield is supported by the stone figure of a retainer, cut in very deep relief, as the achievement was to be seen from the street below. But the shield itself rivets one's attention. This griffin can be classed with the Stryge, or

* *Cf.* those high up on the Loggia de' Lanzi, or in other Tuscan towns where the climate was not more severe, but where there was less cash or inclination to replace the shields which were worn away.

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THE MARTELLI SHIELD

the Etruscan Chimæra as a classic example of the fantastic monsters which were used for conventional purposes, but which were widely believed to exist. It possesses all the traditional attributes of the griffin. It is fearless and heartless: its horrible claws strike out to wound in every direction, and the whole body vibrates with feline elasticity, as well as the agile movement of a bird. Regarding it purely as a composition, we see how admirably Donatello used the space at his command: his economy of the shield is masterly. It is occupied at every angle, but nowhere crowded. The spaces which are left vacant are deliberately contrived to enhance the effect of the figure. It is the antithesis of the Marzocco.* The sculptor must have seen lions, but the Marzocco is not treated in a heraldic spirit, although it holds the heraldic emblem of Florence, the *fleur de lys florencée*. Physically it is unsuccessful, for it has no spring, there is very little muscle in the thick legs which look like pillars, and the back is far too broad. But Donatello is saved by his tact; he was ostensibly making the portrait of a lion; though he gives none of its features, he gives us all the chief leonine characteristics. He excelled in imaginary animals, like the Chinese artists who make admirable dragons, but indifferent tigers.

* The marble original is now in the Bargello, and has been replaced by a bronze *replica* which occupies the old site on the Ringhiera of the Palazzo Pubblico. Lions were popular in Florence. Albertini mentions an antique porphyry lion in the Casa Capponi, much admired by Lorenzo de' Medici. Paolo Ucello painted a lion fight for Cosimo. The curious rhymed chronicle of 1459 describes the lion fights in the great Piazza ("Rer. It. Script.," ii. 722). Other cases could be quoted. Donatello also made a stone lion for the courtyard of the house used by Martin V. during his visit to Florence in 1419-20.

The Siena Font. Siena had planned her Cathedral on so ambitious a scale, that had not the plague reduced her to penury the Duomo of Florence would have been completely outrivalled. The Sienese, however, ordered various works of importance for their Cathedral, and among these the Font takes a high place. It was entrusted to Jacopo della Quercia, who had the active assistance of Donatello and Ghiberti, as well as that of the Turini and Neroccio, townsmen of his own. Donatello was thus brought under new influences. He made a relief, a *sportello* or little door, two statuettes, and some children, all in bronze, being helped in the casting by Michelozzo. Jacopo, who was about ten years older than Donatello, had been a competitor for the Baptistery gates. He was a man of immense power, in some ways greater than Donatello; never failing to treat his work on broad and massive lines, and one of the few sculptors whose work can survive mutilation. The fragments of the Fonte Gaya need no reconstruction or repair to tell their meaning; their statuesque virtues, though sadly mangled, proclaim the unmistakable touch of genius. But Donatello's personality was not affected by the Sienese artists. Jacopo, it is true, was constantly absent, being busily engaged at Bologna, to the acute annoyance of the Sienese, who ordered him to return forthwith. Jacopo said he would die rather than disobey, "*potius eligeret mori quam non obedire patrie suæ*"; but the political troubles at the northern town prevented his prompt return. However, after being fined he got home, was reconciled to the Chapter, and ultimately received high honours from the city. His font is an interesting example of transition; the base is much more Gothic than the upper part. The

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SALOME RELIEF, SIENA

STATUETTE OF FAITH (TO LEFT)

base or font proper is a large hexagonal bason decorated with six bronze reliefs and a bronze statuette between each —Faith, Hope, Charity, Justice, Prudence, and Strength. The reliefs are scenes from the life of the Baptist. From the centre of the font rises the tall Renaissance tabernacle with five niches, in which Jacopo placed marble statues of David and the four major prophets, one of which suggested the San Petronio of Michael Angelo. A statue of the Baptist surmounts the entire font. In spite of the number of people who co-operated with Jacopo, the whole composition is harmonious. Donatello made the gilded statuettes of Faith and Hope. The former, looking downwards, has something of Sienese severity. Hope is with upturned countenance, joining her hands in prayer; charming alike in her gesture and pose. Two instalments for these figures are recorded in 1428. The authorities had been lax in paying for the work, and we have a letter * asking the Domopera for payment, Donatello and Michelozzo being rather surprised—"*assai maravigliati*"—that the florins had not arrived. The last of these bronze Virtues, by Goro di Neroccio, was not placed on the font till 1431. Donatello also had the commission for the *sportello*, the bronze door of the tabernacle. But the authorities were dissatisfied with the work and returned it to the sculptor, though indemnifying him for the loss.† This was in 1434, the children for the upper cornice having been made from 1428 onwards. The relief, which was ordered in 1421, was finished some time in 1427. It is Donatello's first relief in bronze, and his earliest definitive effort to use a complicated architectural background. The incident is the head of St. John being presented on the charger by the kneeling executioner.

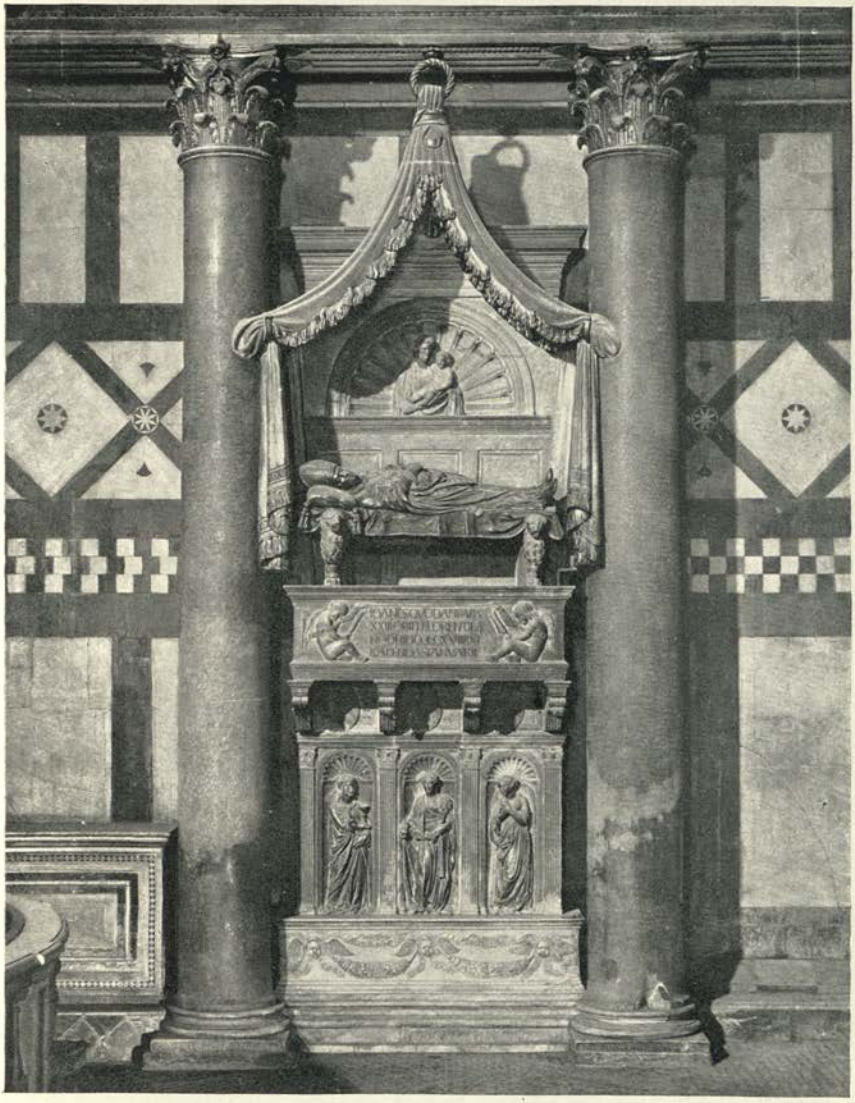
* 9. v. 1427. Milanesi, ii. 134. † Lusini, 28.

Herod starts back dismayed at the sight, suddenly realising the purport of his action. Two children playing beside him hurriedly get up; one sees that in a moment they, too, will be terror-stricken. Salome watches the scene; it is very simple and very dramatic. The bas-relief of St. George releasing Princess Sabra, the Cleodolinda of Spencer's Faerie Queen, is treated as an epic, the works having a connecting bond in the figures of the girls, who closely resemble each other. Much as one admires the *élan* of St. George slaying the dragon, this bronze relief of Siena is the finer of the two; it is more perfect in its way, and Donatello shows more apt appreciation of the spaces at his disposal. The Siena plaque, like the marble relief of the dance of Salome at Lille, to which it is analogous, has a series of arches vanishing into perspective. They are not fortuitous buildings, but are used by the sculptor to subdivide and multiply the incidents. They give depth to the scene, adding a sense of the beyond. The Lille relief has a wonderful background, full of hidden things, reminding one of the mysterious etchings of Piranesi.

Michelozzo and the Coscia Tomb.

For ten years Donatello was associated with Michelozzo,* who began as assistant and finally entered into a partnership which lasted until 1433. The whole subject is obscure, and until we have a critical biography of Michelozzo his relation with various men and monuments of the fifteenth century must remain problematical. Michelozzo has not hitherto received his due meed of appreciation. As a sculptor and architect he frequently held a subordinate position, and it

* See "Arch. Storico dell' Arte," 1893, p. 209.



Alinari

TOMB OF COSCIA, POPE JOHN XXIII.

BAPTISTERY, FLORENCE

has been assumed that he therefore lacked independence and originality. But the man who was Court architect of the Medici, and director of the Cathedral building staff, was no mere hack; while his sculpture at Milan, Naples, and Montepulciano show that his plastic abilities were far from mean. He was a great man with interludes of smallness. When Donatello required technical help in casting, Michelozzo was called in. Though Donatello had worked for Ghiberti on the bronze gates, he was never quite at home in the science of casting. Gauricus says he always employed professional help—"*nunquam fudit ipse, campanariorum usus opera semper.*" * Caldieri cast for him at Padua. Michelozzo also helped Luca della Robbia in casting the Sacristy gates which Donatello should have made; the commissions which Donatello threw over were those for work in bronze. The partnership extended over some of the best years of Donatello's life, and three tombs, the St. Louis, and the Prato pulpit are among their joint products. The tombs of Pope John XXIII. in the Baptistery, that of Aragazzi the Papal Secretary at Montepulciano, and that of Cardinal Brancacci at Naples, are noteworthy landmarks in the evolution of sepulchral monuments, which attained their highest perfection in Italy. In discussing them it will be seen how fully Michelozzo shared the responsibilities of Donatello. Baldassare Coscia, on his election to the Papacy, took the title of John XXIII. He was deposed by a council and retired to Florence, where he died in 1418. He was befriended by the Medici, who erected the monu-

* "De Sculptura," 1504, folio e. 1. On the other hand, the sculptor Verrochio cast a bell for the Vallombrosans in 1474, and artillery for the Venetian Republic.

ment, the last papal tomb outside Rome, to his memory. "*Johannes Quondam Papa XXIII.*" is inscribed on it, and it is said that Coscia's successful rival objected to this appellation of his predecessor, but the protest went unheeded. The tomb is remarkable in many ways. Its construction is most skilful, as it was governed by the two upright pillars between which the monument had to be fitted. We have a series of horizontal lines; a frieze at the base, then three Virtues; above this the effigy, and finally a Madonna beneath a baldachino. Each tier is separated by lines which intersect the columns at right angles. The task of making a monument which would not be dwarfed by these huge plain pillars was not easy. But the tomb, which is decorated with prudent reserve, holds its own. The effigy is bronze: all the rest is marble. It was probably coloured, and a drawing in Ghiberti's note-book gives a background of cherry red, with the figures gilded.* Coscia lies in his mitre and episcopal robes, his head turned outwards towards the spectator. The features are admirably modelled with the firmness and consistency of living flesh: indeed it is the portrait of a sleeping man, troubled, perhaps, in his dream. The tomb was made some years after Coscia's death, and Donatello has not treated him as a dead man. The effigy is a contrast to that of Cardinal Brancacci, where we have the unmistakable lineaments and fallen features of a corpse. The dusky hue of Coscia's face should be noticed; the bronze appears to have been rubbed with some kind of dark composition, similar in tone to that employed by Torrigiano. Below the recum-

* *Op. cit.* p. 70. In this drawing two *putti* are also shown holding a shield, above the monument; this has now disappeared.

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EFFIGY OF POPE JOHN XXIII.

BAPTISTERY, FLORENCE

bent Pope is the sarcophagus; two delightful winged boys hold the cartel on which the epitaph is boldly engraved. The three marble figures in niches at the base, Faith, Hope and Charity, belong to a different category. Albertini says that the bronze is by Donatello, and "*li ornamenti marmorei di suoi discipuli.*" Half a century later, Vasari says that Donatello made two of them, and that Michelozzo made the Faith, which is the least successful of the three. Modern criticism tends to revert to Albertini, assigning all to Michelozzo, with the presumption that Hope, which is derived from the Siena statuette, was executed from Donatello's design. Certainly the basal figures are without the *brio* of Donatello's chisel; likewise the Madonna above the effigy, which is vacillating, and may have been the earliest work of Pagno di Lapo, a man about whom we have slender authenticated knowledge, but whom we know to have been well employed in and around Florence. In any case, we cannot reconcile this Madonna with Michelozzo's sculpture. As will be seen later on, Michelozzo had many faults, but he was seldom insipid. The Madonna and Saints on the façade of Sant' Agostino at Montepulciano show that Michelozzo was a vigorous man. This latter work is certainly by him, the local tradition connecting it with one Pasquino da Montepulciano being unfounded. The Coscia tomb is among the earliest of that composite type which soon pervaded Italy. At least one other monument was directly copied from it, that of Raffaello Fulgosio at Padua. This was made by Giovanni da Pisa, and the sculptor's conflict between respect for the old model, and his desires after the new ideas, is apparent in the whole composition.

The Aragazzi Tomb.

In the *Denunzia de' beni* of 1427 Donatello states that he was working with Michelozzo on the tomb of Bartolommeo Aragazzi, and the monument has therefore been ascribed to them both. But recent research has established that, though preparatory orders were given in that year, a fresh contract was made two years later, and that Donatello's share in the work was nil. Michelozzo alone got payment up to 1436 or thereabouts, when the tomb was completed. Donatello's influence would, perhaps, have been visible in the design, but unhappily we can no longer even judge of this, for the tomb is a wreck, having been broken up to make room for structural alterations.* Important fragments are preserved, scattered about the church; but the sketch of the tomb, said to be preserved in the local library, has never yet been discovered. The monument had ill-fortune from the very beginning. An amusing letter has come down to us, pathetic too, for it records the first incident in the tragedy. Leonardo Aretino writes to Poggio, that when going home one day he came across a party of men trying to extricate a wagon which had stuck in the deep ruts. The oxen were out of breath and the teamsmen out of temper. Leonardo went up to them and made inquiries. One of the carters, wiping the sweat from his brow, muttered an imprecation upon poets, past, present and future (*Dii perdant poetas omnes, et qui fuerunt unquam et qui*

* The effigy is placed in a niche close to the great door of the Cathedral, put there "lest the memory of so distinguished a man should perish"—"*Simulacrum ejus diu neglectum, ne tanti viri memoria penitus deleretur, Politiana pietas hic collocandum curavit anno MDCCCXV.*" The remainder consists of a frieze now incorporated in the high altar, on either side of which stand two caryatides. The Christ Blessing is close by. Two bas-reliefs are inserted into pillars opposite the effigy.

futuri sunt.) Leonardo, a poet himself, asked what harm they had done him: and the man simply replied that it was because this poet, Aragazzi, who was lately dead, ordered his marble tomb to be taken all the way to Montepulciano from Rome, where he died; hence the trouble. "*Hæc est imago ejus quam cernis,*" said the man, pointing to the effigy, having incidentally remarked that Aragazzi was "*stultus nempe homo ac ventosus.*"* Certainly Aragazzi was not a successful man, and he was addicted to vanity. In the marble we see a wan melancholy face, seemingly of one who failed to secure due measure of public recognition. The monument need not be further described, except to say that two of the surviving figures are very remarkable. They probably acted as caryatides, of which there must have been three, replacing ordinary columns as supporters of the sarcophagus. They can hardly be Virtues, for they are obviously muscular men with curly hair and brawny arms. They are not quite free from mannerisms: the attitudes, granting that the bent position were required by their support of the tomb, are not quite easy or natural. But, in spite of this, they are really magnificent things, placing their author high among sculptors of his day.

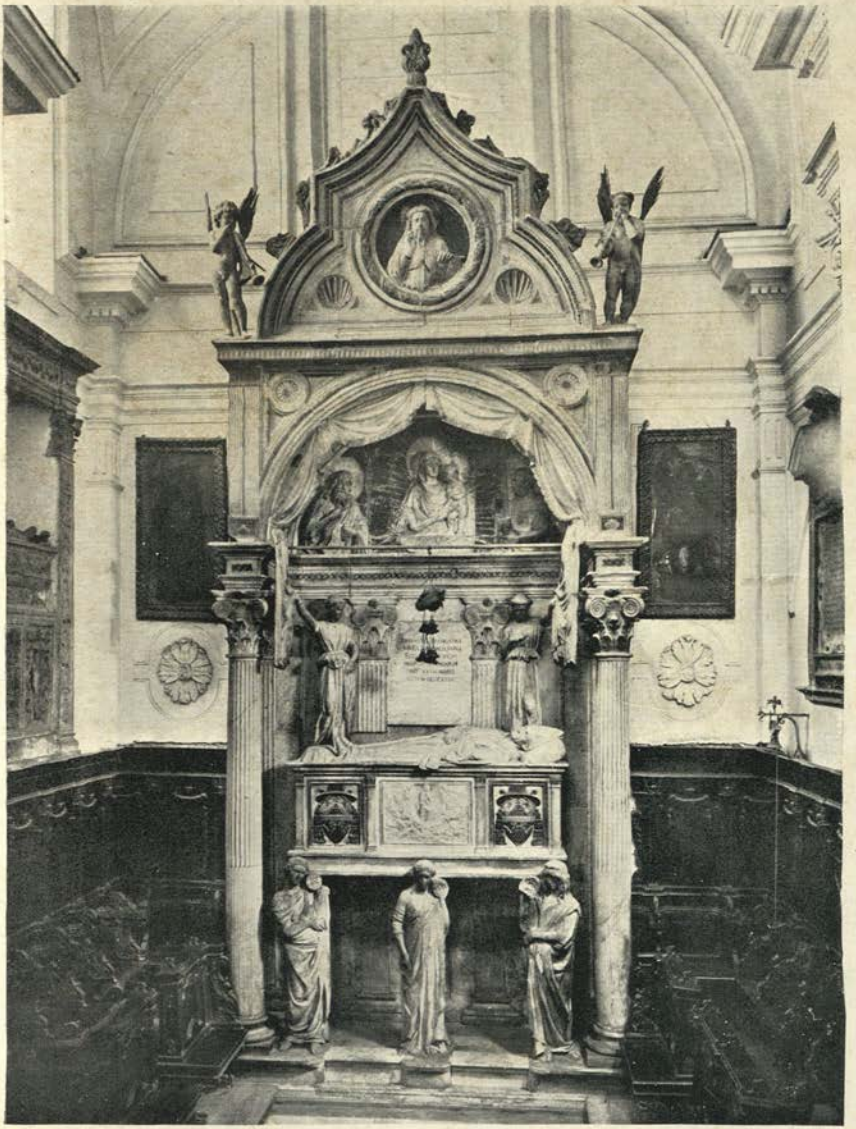
The Brancacci Tomb. The Church of Sant' Angelo a Nilo at Naples contains the monument of Cardinal Brancacci, one of the most impressive tombs of this period. The scheme is a modification of the Coscia tomb. Instead of the three Virtues in niches at the base, there are three larger allegorical figures, which are free standing

* "Letters," Florence ed. 1741, vol. ii. 45.

caryatides below the sarcophagus. They are allegorical figures, perhaps Fates, and correspond with the two somewhat similar statues at Montepulciano. The Cardinal's effigy lies upon the stone coffin, the face of which has a bas-relief between heraldic shields. Two angels stand above the recumbent figure, holding back the curtain which extends upwards to the next storey, surrounding a deep lunette in which there is a Madonna between two Saints. Here the monument should have ended, but it is surmounted by an ogival arch, flanked by two trumpeting children and with a central medallion of God the Father. This topmost tier may have been a subsequent addition. It overweights the whole monument, introduces a discordant architectural motive, and is decorated by inferior sculpture. The Madonna in the lunette is also poor, and the curtain looks as if it were made of lead. But the lower portion of the tomb compensates for the faults above. The caryatides, the bas-relief of the Assumption, the Cardinal himself and the mourning angels above him, are all superb in their different ways. Michelozzo may have been responsible for the architecture, and Pagno di Lapo for the upper reliefs. Donatello himself made the priceless relief of the Assumption, also the effigy, and the two attendants standing above it. The entire tomb is marble; it was made at Pisa,* close to the inexhaustible quarries which, being near to the sea, made transport easy and cheap. From the time of Strabo, the *marmor Lunense* had been carried thence to every port of the Peninsula.†

* Donatello worked there for eighteen months. See documents in Centofanti, p. 4, &c.

† "... *Lapides albi et discolores ad cæruleum vergente specie.*" Strabo, "Geog.," 1807 ed., I. v. p. 314.



Alinari

TOMB OF CARDINAL BRANCACCI

NAPLES

Michelozzo took the tomb to Naples, and perhaps added the final touches: not, indeed, that the carving is quite complete, the Cardinal's ear, for instance, being rough-hewn. Brancacci lies to the left, wearing a mitre on his head, which is raised on a pillow. The chiselling of the face is masterly. The features are shown in painful restless repose. The eyes are sunken and half closed: the lips are drawn, the brow contracted, and the throat shows all the tendons and veins which one notices in the Habbakuk, but which are here relaxed and uncontrolled. It is a death-mask: a grim and instantaneous likeness of the supreme moment, when the agony may have passed away, but not without leaving indelible traces of the crisis. The two angels look down on the dead prelate. They hold back the curtain which would conceal the effigy, thus inviting the spectator into the privacy of the tomb. In some ways these two angels are among the noblest creations of the master. They are comparatively small, their position is subordinate, and they have been repaired by a clumsy journeyman. Yet they have a majestic solemnity. They are calm impersonal mourners—not shrouded like the bowed figures which bear the effigy of the Sénéchal of Burgundy.* They stand upright, simply posed and simply clad guardian angels, absorbed by watching the dead. The three large figures which support the sarcophagus are by Michelozzo, and are intimately related to the Aragazzi caryatides. That on the right has a Burgundian look. They form a striking group, and their merits are not appreciated as they should be owing to the excellence of the sculpture immediately above them.

* Louvre, No. 216. Tomb of Philippe Pot, circa 1480.

Stiacciato. The Assumption of the Virgin occupies the central position of the tomb. It is a small panel. The Virgin is seated in a folding-chair which is familiar in fifteenth-century art. Surrounding her are angels supporting the clouds which make an oval halo round her, a *mandorla.* The cloud, curiously enough, is very heavy, yielding to the touch, and upheld by the flying angels, whose hands press their way into it, and bear their burden with manifest effort. There is none of the limpid atmosphere which Perugino secured in painting, and Ghiberti in sculpture. But, on the other hand, the air is full of drama, presaging an event for which Donatello thought a placid sky unsuitable. There are seven angels in all; the lowest, upon whose head the Virgin rests her foot, is half Blake and half Michael Angelo. But there are many other busy little cherubs swimming, climbing, and flying amidst the interstices of cloudland. The Virgin herself, draped in easy-flowing material, has folded her hands, and awaits her entry to Paradise. Her face is the picture of anxiety and apprehension. The Assumption is carved in the lowest possible relief, called *stiacciato.* The word means depressed or flattened. It is the word with which Condivi describes the appearance of Michael Angelo's nose after it had been broken—it was "*un poco stiacciato; non per natura,*" but by the blow of a certain Torrigiano, "*huomo bestiale e superbo.*" * Donatello was fond of this method of work. We have a fine example in London,† and his most successful use of *stiacciato* is on the Roman Tabernacle made a few years after the Brancacci relief. Donatello did not invent this style. It had been used in

* "Vita di Michael Angelo," Rome, 1553, p. 49.

† Victoria and Albert Museum, Charge to Peter. See p. 95.

classical times, though scarcely to the extent of Donatello, who drew in the marble. The Assyrians also used this low-relief; we find the system fully understood in what are perhaps the most spirited hunting scenes in the world.* In these we also notice the square and rectangular undercutting similar to that in many of Donatello's reliefs. Another specimen of this very low-relief is found in Mr. Quincy Shaw's marble panel of the Virgin and Child seated among clouds and surrounded by *putti*. This has been attributed to Donatello on good authority,† though it must be remarked that the cherubs' faces show poverty of invention which might suggest the hand of a weaker man. Moreover, the cherubs have halos, which is a later development, and quite contrary to Donatello's early practice. But the relief is an interesting composition, and if by Donatello, may be regarded as the parent of a group which attained popularity. M. Gustave Dreyfus has a smaller marble variant of great charm, made by Desiderio. A stucco panel treated in much the same manner is preserved at Berlin. The Earl of Wemyss has an early version in *repoussé* silver of high technical merit. From this point of view nothing is more instructive than a Madonna and Child at Milan.‡ It is probably the work of Pierino da Vinci, and is a thin oval slab of marble carved on either side. One side is unfinished, and is most valuable as showing the facility with which the sharp graving tools were employed to incise the marble. The composition bears a resemblance to the reliefs just mentioned, and the pose of the two heads is Donatellesque, but the Child is elongated and ill-drawn. Again, from a

* British Museum, Assyrian Saloon, Nos. 63–6.

† Bode, "Florentiner Bildhauer," p. 119.

‡ In the Museo Archeologico in the Castello, unnumbered.

technical point of view, a medallion portrait of the late Lord Lytton shows that artists of our own day have used *stiacciato* with perfect confidence and success.* Donatello was not always quite consistent in its employment. In the Entombment at Padua it is combined with high-relief. He, no doubt, acted deliberately; that is to say, he did not sketch a hand in *stiacciato*, because he had forgotten to provide for it in deeper relief. But the result is that the quality of the different planes is lost, and there are discrepancies in the relative values of distance. The final outcome of *stiacciato* is the art of the medallist. It is said that Donatello made a medal, but nobody has determined which it is. Michelozzo certainly made one of Bentivoglio, about 1445.† This admirable art, which reached its perfection during Donatello's lifetime, owes something of its progress to the pioneer of *stiacciato*.

Tombs of Pecci, Crivelli, and Others.

The tomb of Giovanni de'Medici in San Lorenzo is interesting, and has been ascribed to Donatello. There is no documentary authority for this attribution, and on stylistic grounds it is untenable.‡ It is a detached tomb, so common elsewhere, but of singular rarity in Italy. The isolated tomb like this one, like that of Ilaria del Carretto, or that of Pope Sixtus IV. in St. Peter's, has great advantages over the tall upright monument *appliqué* to a church wall. The latter is, however, the ordinary type of the Renaissance.

* By Alfred Gilbert, R.A., belonging to the present Earl of Lytton.

† See Armand, "Les Médailleurs Italiens," 1887, iii. p. 3.

‡ Wreaths and *putti* form its decoration, and though Donatellesque, they are not by Donatello. This was pointed out as early as 1819. See "Monumenti Sepolcrali della Toscana," p. 28.

The free-standing tomb can be seen from all aspects and lights. Although it must be smaller—some of the later wall-tombs are fifty feet high—the sculptor was obliged to keep his entire work well within the range of vision, and had to rely on plastic art alone for success. Much admirable sculpture, especially the effigies, has been lost by being placed too high on some pretentious catafalque in relief against a wall. The tomb of Giovanni, it is true, though standing in the centre of the sacristy, is covered by a large marble slab, which is the priest's table. It throws the tomb into dark shadow and makes it difficult to see the carving. There are few tombs of important people upon which so much trouble has been expended with so little result. Donatello is also said to have made a tomb for the Albizzi, but it has perished.* The tomb of Chellini in San Miniato, which tradition ascribed to Donatello, is probably the work of Pagno di Lapo. The prim and priggish Cardinal Accaiuoli in the Certosa of Florence does not suggest Donatello's hand. Though conscientious and painstaking, the work is without a spark of energy or conviction. These latter are slab-tombs, flat plates fastened into the church pavements. We have two authentic tombs of this character, on both of which Donatello has signed his name. Had he not done so, we could never have established his authorship of the marble slab-tomb of Archdeacon Crivelli in the Church of Ara Cœli at Rome. It has been trampled by the feet of so many generations, that all the features have been worn away; the legend is wholly effaced in certain parts, and one corner has had to be restored (though at some early date). But at best it cannot have compared with Donatello's similar tomb of

* Bocchi, 354.

Bishop Pecci at Siena, and one could quote numerous instances of equally good work by nameless men. There is one close to the Crivelli marble itself, another in the Pisa Baptistery, two in Santa Croce, and so forth. This kind of tomb had to undergo rough usage. Everybody walked upon it: the deep relief made it a receptacle for mud and rubbish. The effigy of the deceased, as was probably intended by him, was humbled in the dust: *adhesit pavimento.* The slabs got injured, and were often protected by low tables with squat legs. Later on the slabs were raised enough to prevent people standing on them, and thus became like free-standing tombs; but it only made them more suitable for the sitting requirements of the congregation. These sunken tombs, in fact, became a nuisance. Although they were not carved in the very deep relief like those one sees in Bavaria, they collected the dirt, and a papal brief was issued to forbid them—*ut in ecclesiis nihil indecens relinquatur,** and the existing slabs were ordered to be removed. Irretrievable damage must have resulted from this edict, but fortunately it was disobeyed in Rome and ignored elsewhere. Nowadays it has become the custom to place these slabs upright against the walls, thus preventing further detrition. To Cavaliere D. Gnoli we owe the preservation of the Crivelli tomb, which was in danger of complete demolition.† By

* Bull., "Cum primum," § 6, "*et ut in ecclesiis nihil indecens relinquatur, iidem provideant, ut capsæ omnes, et deposita, seu alia cadaverum, conditoria super terram existentia omnino amoveantur, pro ut alias statutum fuit, et defunctorum corpora in tumbis profundis, infra terram collocentur.*" Bullarium, 1566, vol. iv., part ii., p. 285. For the whole question of the evolution of these tombs, see Dr. von Lichtenberg's valuable book, "Das Porträt an Grabdenkmalen," Strassburg, 1902.

† See "Archivio Storico dell' Arte," 1888, p. 24, &c.

being embedded in a wall instead of lying in a pavement this kind of monument, while losing its primitive position, often gains in appearance. Crivelli, for instance, lies within an architectural niche. His head rests on a pillow, the tassels of which fall downwards towards his feet. When placed against a wall the need for a pillow may vanish, but the meaning and use of the niche becomes apparent, while the tassels no longer defy the laws of gravitation. He becomes a standing figure at once, and the flying *putti* above his head assume a rational pose. It has been suggested that this and similar tomb-plates were always intended to be placed upright, and that the delicate ornamentation, of which some traces survive, would never have been lavished on marble doomed to gradual destruction. No general rule can be laid down, but undoubtedly most of these slabs were meant to be recumbent. There are few cases where some contradiction of *emplacement* with pose cannot be detected. But two examples may be noted where the slabs were clearly intended to be placed in walls. An unnamed bishop at Bologna lies down, while at either end of the slab an angel *stands*, at right angles to the recumbent figure, holding a pall or curtain over the dead man.* Signor Bardini also has an analogous marble effigy of a mitred bishop, about 1430–40, who lies down while a friar stands behind his head. These slabs were, therefore, obviously made for insertion in a wall, and they are quite exceptional. The tomb-plate of Bishop Pecci in Siena Cathedral is less open to objection on the ground of incongruity between its position and the Bishop's pose. It is made of bronze, and is set in the tessellated pavement of green, white and mauve marble. Technically it is a

* In Santo Stefano, Cortile di Pilato.

triumph. Although the surface is considerably worn, we have the sense of absolute calm and repose—in striking contrast to the wearied look of Brancacci. The Bishop died on March 1, 1426; a few days previously he wrote his will, while he lay dying—"*sanus mente licet corpore languens*"—and left careful instructions as to his burial in an honourable part of the Cathedral and how the exact cost of his funeral was to be met.* In a way the figure resembles St. Louis, and Donatello probably had the help of Michelozzo in the casting. The work itself is extremely good, and the bronze has the rich colour which one finds most frequently in the smaller provincial towns where time is allowed to create its own *patina*. Donatello was a bold innovator, and the Tomb of Coscia, though not the parent of the Renaissance theory of funeral monuments, had marked influence upon its evolution. From the simple outdoor tombs placed upon pillars, such as one principally finds north of the Apennines, there issued a grander idea which culminated in the monuments of the Scaligers at Verona. But Donatello reverted to the earlier type of indoor tomb, and from his day the tendency to treat them as an integral feature of mural and structural decoration steadily increased. A host of sculptors filled the Tuscan churches with those memorials which constitute one of their chief attractions. These men imbued death with its most gentle aspect, concealing the tragedy and sombre meaning of their work with gay arabesques and the most living and lovable creations of their fancy. The *putti*, the bright heraldry, the play of colour, and the opulence of decoration, often distract one's eye from the effigy of the dead: and he, too, is often smiling. He may represent

* "Misc. Storica Senese," 1893, p. 30.

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TOMB PLATE OF BISHOP PECCI

SIENA CATHEDRAL

the past: the rest of the tomb is born of the present, and seldom—exception being made for a group of tombs to which reference will be made later on*—seldom is there much regard for the future. The dead at least are not asked to bury their dead. They lie in state, surrounded by all that is most young and blithe in life: it is a death which shows no indifference to the life which is left behind. With them death is in the midst of life, not life in the midst of death. Donatello was too severe for the later Renaissance, and the brilliant sculptors who succeeded him lost influence in their turn. With the development of sculpture, which during Michael Angelo's lifetime acquired a technical skill to which Donatello never aspired, the tomb became a vehicle for ostentation and display; and there was a reaction towards the harsher symbols of death. Instead of the quiet mourner who really mourns, we have the strident and professional weeper—a parody of sorrow. Tier upon tier these prodigious monuments rise, covering great spaces of wall, decorated with skulls and skeletons, with Time carrying his scythe, with negro caryatides, and with apathetic or showy models masquerading as the cardinal virtues. The effigy itself is often perched up so high as to be invisible, or sitting in a ridiculous posture. "Princes' images on their tombs," says Bosola in Webster's play, "do not lie as they were wont, seeming to pray up to heaven; but with their hands under their cheeks, as if they had died of toothache."† Venice excelled in this rotund and sweltering sculpture. Yet it cannot be wholly condemned. Though artificial, theatrical and mundane, its technical supremacy cannot be

* See p. 171.

† From the Duchess of Malfi, quoted in Symonds' "Fine Arts," p. 114.

denied. The amazing ease with which these huge monuments are contrived, and the absolute sense of mastery shown by the sculptor over the material are qualities too rare to be lightly overlooked. Whatever we may think of the artist, our admiration is commanded by the craftsman.

The Second Visit to Rome.

During the year 1433, when Florence enjoyed the luxury of driving Cosimo de' Medici into exile, Donatello went to Rome in order to advise Simone Ghini about the tomb of Pope Martin V. —*temporum suorum felicitas*, as the epitaph says.* This visit to Rome, which is not contested, like the visit thirty years earlier, did not last long, and certainly did not divert Donatello from the line he had struck out. At this moment the native art of Rome was colourless. A generation later it became classical, and then lapsed into decadence. The number of influences at work was far smaller than would at first be imagined. It is generally assumed that Rome was the home of classical sculpture. But early in the fifteenth century Rome must have presented a scene of desolation. The city had long been a quarry. Under Vespasian the Senate had to pass a decree against the demolition of buildings for the purpose of getting the stone.† Rome was plundered by her emperors. She was

* It is a bronze slab, admirably wrought and preserved, in S. Giovanni Laterano. Were it not for an exuberance of decoration, one might say that Donatello was responsible for it; the main lines certainly harmonise with his work. Simone Ghini was mistaken by Vasari for Donatello's somewhat problematical brother Simone.

† See Codex. Just. Leg. 2. Cod. de ædif. privatis. A similar law at Herculaneum had forbidden people to make more money by breaking

looted by Alaric, Genseric, Wittig and Totila in days when much of her art remained *in situ*. She was plundered by her Popes. Statues were used as missiles; her marble was exported all over the world—to the Cathedrals of Orvieto and Pisa, even to the Abbey Church of Westminster. Suger, trying to get marble columns for his church, looked longingly at those in the baths of Diocletian, a natural and obvious source, though happily he stole them elsewhere.* The vandalism proceeded at an incredible pace. Pius II. issued a Bull in 1462 to check it; in 1472 Sixtus IV. issued another. Pius, however, quarried largely between the Capitol and the Colosseum. The Forum was treated as an ordinary quarry which was let out on contract, subject to a rental equivalent to one-third of the output. But in 1433, and still more during the first visit, there was comparatively little sculpture which would lead Donatello to classical ideas. Poggio, writing just before Donatello's second visit, says he sees almost nothing to remind him of the ancient city.† He speaks of a statue with a complete head as if that were very remarkable—almost the only statue he mentions at all. Ghiberti describes two or three antique statues with such enthusiasm that one concludes he was familiar with very few. In fact, before the great digging movement which enthralled the Renaissance, antique sculpture was rare. But little of Poggio's collection came from Rome: Even Lorenzo de' Medici got most of his from the provinces. A century later Sabba

up a house than they paid for the house itself, under penalty of being fined double the original outlay. This shows the extent of speculative destruction. Reinesius, "Synt. Inscript. Antiq.," 475, No. 2.

* See his Libellus in "Rer. Gall. Script.," xiv. 313.

† *Nihil fere recognoscat quod priorem urbem repræsentet*, in "De Varietate fortunæ urbis Romæ. Nov. Thes. Antiq. Rom.," i. 502.

del Castiglione complains of having to buy a Donatello owing to the difficulty of getting good antiques.* Rome had been devastated by cupidity and neglect as much as by fire and sword. "Ruinarum urbis Romæ descriptio" is the title of one of Poggio's books. Alberti says that in his time he had seen 1200 ruined churches in the city.† Bramantino made drawings of some of them.‡ Pirro Ligorio, an architect of some note, gives his recipe for making lime from antique statues—so numerous had they become. But much remained buried before that time, *sotterrate nelle Rovine d'Italia*,§ and Vasari explains that Brunellesco was delighted with a classical urn at Cortona, about which Donatello had told him, because such a thing was rare in those times, antique objects not having been dug up in such quantities as during his own day.‖ But the passion for classical learning developed quickly, and was followed by the desire for classical art. Dante had scarcely realised the art of antiquity, though more was extant in 1300 than in 1400. Petrarch, who was more sympathetic towards it, could scarcely translate an elementary inscription. From the growing desire for knowledge came the search for tangible relics: but love of classical art was founded on sentiment and tradition. As regards the sculptors themselves, their art was less influenced by antiquity than were

* "Ricordi," 1544. No. 109, p. 51.

† Written about 1450. "De re ædificatoria." Paris ed. 1553, p. 165.

‡ *Cf.* Plate 49 in "Le Rovine di Roma." "Tempio circolare." Written beside it is "*Questo sie uno tempio lo quale e Atiuero* (i.e., *che e presso al Tevere*) *dove se chauaue li prede antigha mente* (i.e., *si cavavano le pietre anticamente*).

§ Vasari, "Proemio," I. 212.

‖ *Cosa allora rara, non essendosi dissotterata quella abbondanza che si è fatta ne' tempi nostri*, I. 203.

the arts of poetry, oratory and prose. While Rossellino, Desiderio, Verrochio and Benedetto da Maiano maintained their individuality, the indigenous literature of Tuscany waned. Sculpture retained its freedom longer than the literary arts, and when the latter recovered their national character sculpture relapsed in their place into classicism. From early times sculptors had, of course, learned what they could from classical exemplars. Niccola Pisano copied at least four classical motives. There was no plagiarism; it was a warm tribute on his part, and at that time a notable achievement to have copied at all. But the imitation of antiquity was carried to absurd lengths. Ghiberti, who was a literary man, says that Andrea Pisano lived in the 410th Olympiad.* But Ghiberti remained a Renaissance sculptor, and his classical affectation is less noticeable in his statues than in his prose. Filippo Strozzi went so far as to emancipate his favourite slave, a "*grande nero*," in his will.† But Gothic art died hard. The earlier creeds of art lingered on in the byways, and the Renaissance was flourishing long before Gothic ideas had completely perished—that is to say, Renaissance in its widest meaning, that of reincarnated love of art and letters: if interpreted narrowly the word loses its deep significance, for the Renaissance engendered forms which had never existed before. But it must be remembered that in sculpture classical ideas preceded classical forms. Averlino, or Filarete, as a classical whim led him to be called, began the bronze doors of St. Peter's just before Donatello's visit. They are replete with classical ideas, ignoble and fantastic, but the art is still Renaissance. Comparatively little

* "2nd Commentary," in Vasari, I. xxviii.

† Gaye, i. 360.

classical art was then visible, and its infallibility was not accepted until many years later, when Rome was being ransacked for her hidden store of antiquities. Statues were exhumed from every heap of ruins, generally in fragments: not a dozen free-standing marble statues have come down to us in their pristine condition. The quarrymen were beset by students and collectors anxious to obtain inscriptions. Traders in forgeries supplied what the diggers could not produce. Classical art became a fetish.* The noble qualities of antiquity were blighted by the imitators, whose inventive powers were atrophied, while their skill and knowledge left nothing to be desired. Excluding the Cosmati, Rome was the mother of no period or movement of art excepting the Rococo. As for Donatello himself, he was but slightly influenced by classical motives. His sojourn in Rome was short, his time fully occupied; he was forty-seven years old and had long passed the most impressionable years of his life. He was a noted connoisseur, and on more than one occasion his opinion on a question of classical art was eagerly sought. But, so far as his own art was concerned, classical influences count for little. His architectural ideas were only classical through a Renaissance medium. When a patron gave him a commission to copy antique gems, he did his task faithfully enough, but without zest and with no ultimate progress in a similar direction. When making a portrait he would decorate the sitter's helmet or breastplate with the cameo which actually adorned it. With one exception,

* *Cf.* the action of the Directory in year vi. of the French Republic. They ordered the statues looted in Italy to be paraded in Paris—hoping to find the clue to ancient supremacy. Louis David pointedly observed, "*La vue. . . . formera peut-être des savans, des Winckelmann: mais des artistes, non.*"

classical art must be sought in his detail, and only in the detail of work upon which the patron's advice could be suitably offered and accepted. Donatello may be compared with the great sculptors of antiquity, but not to the extent of calling him their descendant. Raffaelle Mengs was entitled to regret that the other Raffaelle did not live in the days of Phidias.* Flaxman was justified in expressing his opinion that some of Donatello's work could be placed beside the best productions of ancient Greece without discredit.† These *obiter dicta* do not trespass on the domain of artistic genealogy. But it is inaccurate to say, for instance, that the St. George is animated by Greek nobility,‡ since in this statue that quality (whether derived from Gothic or Renaissance ideals) cannot possibly have come from a classical source. Baldinucci is on dangerous ground in speaking of Donatello as "*emulando mirabilmente la perfezione degli antichissimi scultori greci*"§ —the writer's acquaintance with archaic Greek sculpture may well have been small! We need not quarrel with Gori for calling Donatello the Florentine Praxiteles; but he is grossly misleading in his statement that Donatello took the greatest pains to copy the art of the ancients.‖ Donatello may be the mediæval complement of Phidias, but he is not his artistic offspring.

* "Works," 1796, i. 151.

† "Lectures," 1838, p. 248.

‡ Semper, p. 93.

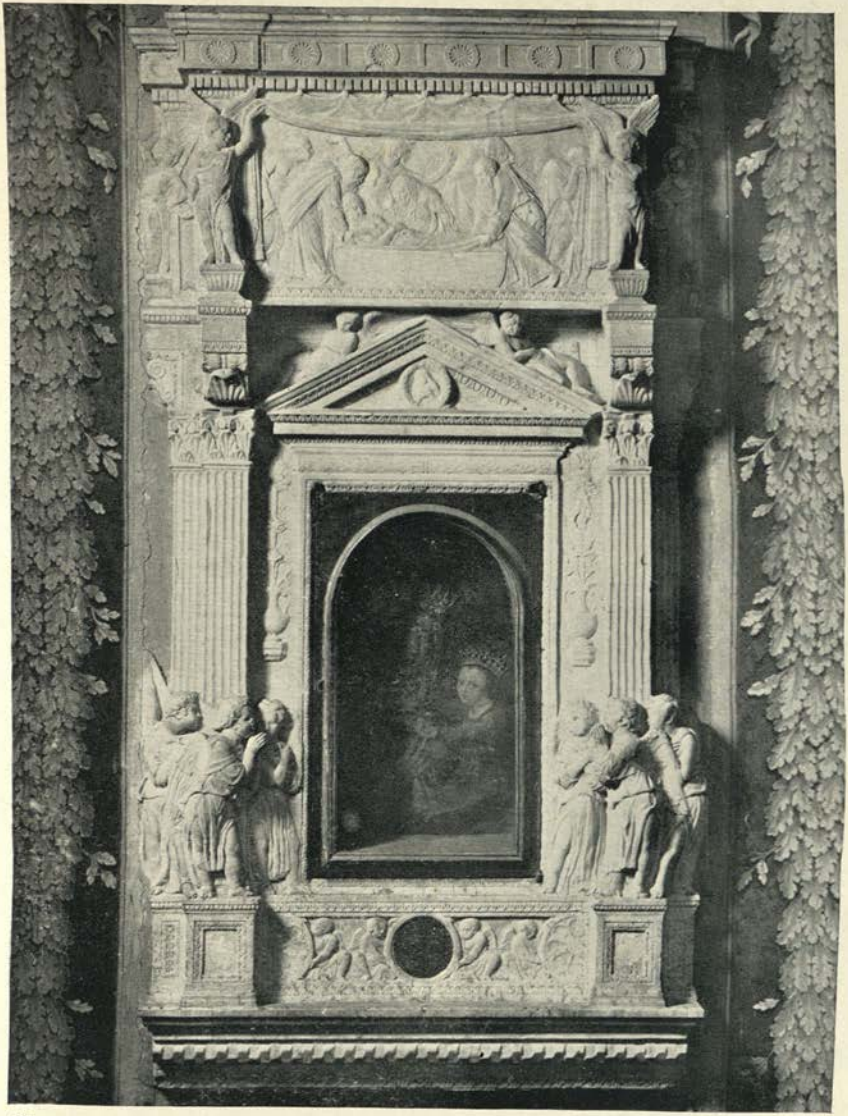
§ Ed. 17 68, p. 74.

‖ "Donatellus, qui primum omnium vetustis monumentis mirifice delectatus est, eaque imitari ac probe exprimere in suis operibus adsidue studuit."—"Dactyliotheca Smithiana," 1768, II. p. cxxvi.

Work at Rome. Up till a few years ago the most important work Donatello made in Rome was unknown. We were aware that he had made a tabernacle, but all record of it was lost, until Herr Schmarsow identified it in 1886.* It was probably made for the Church of Santa Maria della Febbre,† and was transported to St. Peter's when Santa Maria was converted into a sacristy. The tabernacle is now in the Sacristy of the Canons, surrounded by sham flowers and tawdry decoration, which reduce its charms to a minimum. Moreover, the miraculous painting of the Madonna and Child which fills the centrepiece—having, perhaps, replaced a metal grille or marble relief, has been so frequently restored that a discordant element is introduced. The tabernacle is about six feet high; it is made of rather coarse Travestine marble, and in several parts shows indications of the hand of an assistant. It has suffered in removal; there are two places where the work has been repaired, and the medallion in the lower frieze has been filled with modern mosaic; otherwise it is in good order. It is essentially an architectural work, but the number of figures introduced has softened the hard lines of the construction, giving it plenty of life. Four little angels, rather stumpy and ill-drawn, are sitting on the lower plinth. Above them rise the main outer columns which support the upper portion of the tabernacle, and enclose the central opening, where the picture is now fixed. At the base of these columns there are two groups of winged children, three on either side, looking inwards towards the central feature of the composition. They bend forward reverently with their hands joined in prayer and adoration

* See Schmarsow, p. 32.

† See "Arch. Storico dell' Arte," 1888, p. 24.



Alinari

TABERNACLE

ST. PETER'S, ROME

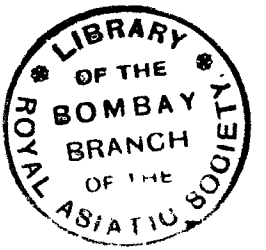
—admirable children, full of shyness and deference. The upper part of the tabernacle, supported on very plain corbels, is occupied by a broad relief, at either end of which stand other winged angels, more boyish and confident than those below. This relief is, perhaps, Donatello's masterpiece in *stiacciato*. It is the Entombment, his first presentment of those intensely vivid scenes which were so often reproduced during his later years. Christ is just being laid in the tomb by two solemn old men with flowing beards, St. Joseph and St. Peter. The Virgin kneels as the body is lowered into the tomb. Behind her is St. Mary Magdalene, her arms extended, her hair dishevelled; scared by the frenzy of her grief. To the right St. John turns away with his face buried in his hands. The whole composition —striking in contrast to the quiet and peaceful figures below—is treated with caution and reserve. But we detect the germ of the pulpits of San Lorenzo, where the rough sketch in clay could transmit all its fire and energy to the finished bronze. In this case Donatello not only felt the limitations of the marble, but he was not yet inclined to take the portrayal of tragedy beyond a certain point. The moderation of this relief entitles it to higher praise than we can give to some of his later work. The other panel in *stiacciato* made about this time belonged to the Salviati family.* Technically the carving is inferior to that in St. Peter's, and it may be that in certain parts, especially,

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7629, 1861. Bocchi says: "*Un quadro di marmo di mano di Donatello di basso relievo: dove è effigiato quando da le chiavi Cristo a S. Pietro. Estimata molto da gli artefici questa opera: la quale per invenzione è rara, e per disegno maravigliosa. Molto è commendata la figura di Cristo, e la prontezza che si scorge nel S. Pietro. E parimente la Madonna posta in ginocchione, la quale in atto affetuoso ha sembiante mirabile e divoto*," p. 372.

for instance, round the heads of Christ and one of the Apostles, the work is unfinished. Christ is seated on the clouds, treated like those on the Brancacci panel, and hands the keys to St. Peter. The Apostles stand by, the Virgin kneels in the foreground, and on the left there are two angels like those on the tabernacle. Trees are lightly sketched in, and no halos are employed. The work is disappointing, for it is carved in such extraordinarily low-relief that parts of it are scarcely recognisable on first inspection; the marble is also rather defective. As a composition—and this can best be judged in the photograph—the Charge to Peter is admirable. The balance is preserved with skill, while the figures are grouped in a natural and easy fashion. The row of Apostles to the left shows a rendering of human perspective which Mantegna, who liked to make his figures contribute to the perspective of the architecture around them, never surpassed. This panel, in spite of Bocchi's praise, shares one obvious demerit with the relief in St. Peter's. The Virgin, who kneels with outstretched hands as she gazes upwards to the Christ, is almost identical with a figure on the Entombment. She is ugly, with no redeeming feature. The pose is awkward, the drapery graceless, the contour thick, and her face, peering out of the thick veil, is altogether displeasing. One has no right to look for beauty in Donatello's statues of adults: character is what he gives. But neither does one expect this kind of vagary. There is great merit in the plaintive and wistful ugliness of the Zuccone: Here the ugliness is wanton, and therefore inexcusable. The Crivelli tomb and the Baptist in San Giovanni Fiorentino have been already described. There were other products of Donatello's visit to Rome, but they are now lost. Tradition still maintains

THE CHARGE TO PETER

LONDON


LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

that the wooden Baptist in S. Giovanni Laterano is his work. But it cannot possibly be by him, though it may be a later copy of a fifteenth-century original. Curiously enough, there is another Baptist in the same church which is Donatellesque in character and analogous in some respects to the St. John at Siena, namely, the large bronze statue signed by Valadier and dated 1772. Valadier was a professional copyist, some of his work being in the Louvre. Where he got the design for this Baptist we do not know; but it is certainly not typical of the late eighteenth century. Titi mentions a head in Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, and a medallion portrait of Canon Morosini in Santa Maria Maggiore.* Neither of them can be found.

The Medici Medallions. The Medici did not remain in exile long, and their return to Florence marks an epoch in the artistic as well as the political history of Tuscany. From this moment the sway of the private collector and patron began. Gradually the great churches and corporations ceased giving orders on the grand scale, for much of the needful decoration was by then completed. By the middle of the century patronage was almost wholly vested in the magnates of commerce and politics: if a chapel were painted or a memorial statue set up, in most cases the artist worked for the donor, and not for the church authorities. The monumental type of sculpture became more rare, *bric à brac* more common. Well-known

* "Ammaestramento Utile," 1686, p. 141. "*Una testa nel deposito a mano destra della Porta Maggiore, è scoltura di Donatello Fiorentino.*" In Chapel of Paul V., Sta. M. Maggiore: "*In terra in una lapide vi è di profilo la figura del Canonico Morosini, opera di Donatello famoso scultore e architetto.*" *Ibid.* p. 241.

men like Donatello received the old kind of commission to the end of their lives, while younger men, though fully occupied, were seldom entrusted with comprehensive orders. Even Michael Angelo was more dependent on the Pope than upon the Church. Among the earliest commissions given by the Medici after their return was an order for marble copies of eight antique gems. These were placed in the courtyard of their Florentine house, now called the Palazzo Riccardi. They are colossal in size, and represent much labour and no profit to art. Nothing is more suitably reproduced on a cameo than a good piece of sculpture; but the engraved gem is the last source to which sculpture should turn for inspiration. Donatello had to enlarge what had already been reduced; it was like copying a corrupt text. The size of these medallions accentuates faults which were unnoticed in the dainty gem. The intaglio of Diomede and the Palladium (now in Naples) is too small to show the fault which is so glaring in the marble relief, where Diomede is in a position which it is impossible for a human being to maintain. But the relief is admirably carved: nothing could be better than the straining sinews of the thigh; and it is of interest as being the only one which is related to any other work of the sculptor. The head of one of the angels in the Brancacci Assumption is taken from this Diomede or from some other version of it. A similar treatment is found in Madame André's relief of a young warrior. It has been pointed out that some of the gems from which these medallions were made did not come into the Medici Collections until many years later.* Cosimo may have owned casts of the originals, or Donatello may have copied

* Molinier, "Les Plaquettes," 1886, p. xxvi.

them in Rome, for they belonged at this time to the Papal glyptothek, from which they were subsequently bought. The subjects of these roundels are Ulysses and Athena, a faun carrying Bacchus, two incidents of Bacchus and Ariadne, a centaur, Dædalus and Icarus, a prisoner before his victor, and the Diomede. Gems became very popular and expensive: a school of engravers grew up who copied, invented, and forged. Carpaccio introduced them into his pictures,* and Botticelli used them so freely that they almost became the ruling element of decoration in the "Calumny." Gems are incidentally introduced in Donatello's bust of the so-called Young Gattamelata, and on Goliath's helmet below the Bronze David. The Medusa head occurs on the base of the Judith, on the Turin Sword hilt, and on the armour of General Gattamelata. So much of Donatello's work has perished that it is almost annoying to see how well these Medici medallions are preserved—the work in which his individuality was allowed little play, and in which he can have taken no pride.

The Bronze David. According to Vasari, the Bronze David was made for Cosimo before the exile of the Medici, and consequently previous to Donatello's second journey to Rome. It was removed from the courtyard of the palace to the Palazzo Pubblico, where it remained for many years. Doni mentions it as being there in 1549,† and soon afterwards it was replaced by Verrochio's fountain of the Boy squeezing the Dolphin. It is now in the

* *Cf.* St. Ursula, Accademia, Venice, No. 574.

† "... *una colonna nel mezzo dove è un Davitte di Donatello dignissimo.*" Letter to Alberto Lollio, 17. viii. 1549, Bottari, iii. 341.

Bargello. The base has been lost. Albertini says it was made of variegated marbles.* Vasari says it was a simple column.† It has been suggested that the marble pillar now supporting the Judith belonged to the David, but the David is even less fitted to this ill-conceived and pedantic shaft than Judith herself. The David soon acquired popularity; the French envoy, Pierre de Rohan, wanted a copy of it. It was certainly a remarkable innovation, being probably the first free-standing nude statue made in Italy for a thousand years. There had been countless nude figures in relief, but the David was intended to be seen from every side of Cosimo's *cortile*. There was no experimental stage with Donatello; his success was immediate and indeed conclusive. David is a stripling. He stands over the head of Goliath, a sword in one hand and a stone in the other, wearing his helmet, a sort of sun-hat in bronze which is decorated with a chaplet of leaves; below his feet is a wreath of bay. It is a consistent study in anatomy. The David is perhaps sixteen years old, agile and supple, with a hand which is big relative to the forearm, as nature ordains. The back is bony and rather angular; the torso is brilliantly wrought, with a purity of outline and a *morbidezza* which made the artists in Vasari's time believe the figure had been moulded from life. One might break the statute into half a dozen pieces, and every fragment would retain its vitality and significance. The limbs are alert and full of young strength, with plenty more held in reserve: it is heroic in all respects except dimension. The face is clear cut, and each feature is

* *Giù abasso è Davit di bronzo sopra la colonna fine di marmo variegato.* "Memoriale."

† "Life of Bandinelli," x. 301.

Alinari

THE BRONZE DAVID

BARGELLO, FLORENCE

rendered with precision. The expression is one of dreamy contemplation as he looks downwards on the spoils and proof of conquest. David hath slain his tens of thousands! Finally the quality of the statue is enhanced by the care with which the bronze has been chiselled. Goliath's helmet, and David's greaves, on which the *fleur de lys florencée* has been damascened, are decorated with unfailing tact. The embellishment is in itself a pleasure to the eye, but it is prudently contained within its legitimate sphere; for Donatello would not allow the accessory to invade the statue itself, which is the chief fault of the rival David by Verrochio. Donatello's statue marks an epoch in the study of anatomy. It is a genuine interpretation of a very perfect piece of humanity; but his knowledge compared with that of his successors was empiric. Leonardo's subtle skill was based upon dissection. Michael Angelo likewise studied from the human corpse, distasteful as he found the process. Donatello had no such scientific training: he had no help from the surgeon or the hospital, hence mistakes; his doubt, for instance, about the connection between ribs and pectoral bones was never resolved. But, notwithstanding this lack of technical data, the Bronze David has a distinction which is absent in statues made by far more learned men. Donatello's intuition supplied what one would not willingly exchange for the most exact science of the specialist. The David was an innovation, but the phrase must be guarded. It was only an innovation so far as it was a free-standing study from the nude. Nothing is more misleading than the commonplace that Christianity was opposed to the representation of the nude in its proper place. The early Church, no doubt, underwent a prolonged reaction against all that it might be assumed to connote;

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one might collect many quotations from patristic literature to this effect. But the very articles of the Christian Creed militated against the ultimate scorn of the human body: the doctrine of the Resurrection alone was enough to give it more sanctity than could be derived from all the polytheism of antiquity. The Baptism of Christ, the descent into Limbo, and the Crucifixion itself, were scenes from which the use of drapery had to be less or more discarded. The porches and frontals of Gothic churches abounded in nude statuary, from scenes in the Garden of Eden down to the Last Judgment. Abuses crept in, of course, and the Faith protested against them. The advancing standard of comfort and, no doubt, a steadily deteriorating climate, diminished the everyday familiarity with undraped limbs. Clothes became numerous and more normal; the artist came to be regarded as the purveyor of what had ceased to be of natural occurrence. He was encouraged by the connoisseur, lay and cleric, who found his literature in antiquity, and then demanded classical forms in his art. The nude was arbitrarily employed: there was no biblical authority for a naked David, and Donatello was therefore among the first to err in this respect. The taste for this kind of thing sprang from humanism, and throve with hellenism, till a counter-reaction came suddenly in the sixteenth century. Michael Angelo was hotly attacked for his excessive study from the nude as prejudicial to morals.* Ammanati wrote an abject apology to the Accademia del Disegno for the very frank nudity of his statues.† Some of the work of Bandinelli and Bronzino had to be removed.

* "Due dialogi di Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano," 1564; a tiresome and discursive tirade.

† 22. viii. 1582. Reprinted in Bottari, ii. 529.

What was a rational and healthy protest has survived in grotesque and ill-fitting drapery made of tin — very negation of propriety. Although needed for biblical imagery, the nude in Italy was always exotic; in Greece it was indigenous. From the time of Homer there had been a worship of physical perfection. The Palæstra, the cultivation of athletics in a nation of soldiers, the religions of the country, with its favourable atmosphere, climate, and stone, all combined to make the nude a normal aspect of human life. But it was not the sole inspiration of their art: in Sparta, where there was most nude there was least art; in Italy, when there was worst art there was most nude.

Donatello and Childhood.

Michael Angelo strove to attain the universal form. His world was peopled with Titans, and he realised his ambition of portraying generic humanity: not, indeed, by making conventional, but by eliminating everything that was not typical. The earliest plastic art took clay and moulded the human form; the next achievement was to make specific man—the portrait; lastly, to achieve what was universal—the type. The progress was from man, to man in particular, and ultimately to man in general. There was a final stage when the typical lost its type without reverting to the specific, to the portrait. The successors of Michael Angelo were among the most skilful craftsmen who ever existed; but their knowledge only bore the fruit of unreality. Donatello did not achieve the typical except in his children: it was only in children that Michael Angelo failed. He missed this supreme opportunity; those on the roof of

the Sistine Chapel are solemn and grown old with care: children without childhood. With Donatello all is different. His greatness and title to fame largely rest upon his typical childhood: his sculpture bears eloquent witness to the closest observation of all its varying and changeful moods. Others have excelled in this or that interpretation of child-life: Greuze with his sentimentalism, the Dutch painters with their stolidity. In Velasquez every child is the scion of some Royal House, in Murillo they are all beggars. They are too often stupid in Michelozzo: in Andrea della Robbia they are always sweet and winsome; Pigalle's children know too much. Donatello alone grasped the whole psychology. He watched the coming generation, and foresaw all that it might portend: tragedy and comedy, labour and sorrow, work and play—plenty of play; and every problem of life is reflected and made younger by his chisel. How far the sculptors of the fifteenth century employed classical ideas is not easily determined. There was, however, one classical form which was widely used, namely, the flying *putti* holding a wreath or coat-of-arms between them: we find it on the frieze of the St. Louis niche, and it is repeated on Judith's dress. The wreath or garland, of which the Greeks were so fond, became a favourite motive for the Renaissance mantelpiece. The classical *amoretti*, of which many versions in bronze existed, were also frequently copied. But there was one radical difference between the children of antiquity and those of the Renaissance. Though children were introduced on to classical sarcophagi and so forth, it is impossible to say that it was for the sake of their youth. There are genii in plenty; and in the imps which swarm over the

emblematic figure of the Nile in the Vatican the sculptor shows no love or respect for childhood. There is no child on the Parthenon frieze, excepting a Cupid, who has really no claim to be reckoned as such. Donatello could not have made a relief 150 yards long without introducing children, whether their presence were justified or not. He would probably have overcrowded the composition with their young forms. Whether right or wrong, he uses them arbitrarily, as simple specimens of pure joyous childhood. Antique sculpture, too, had its arbitrary and conventional adjuncts—the Satyr and the Bacchic attendants; but how dreary that the vacant spaces in a relief should have to rely upon what is half-human or offensive—the avowedly inhuman gargoyles of the thirteenth century are infinitely to be preferred. Donatello was possessed by the sheer love of childhood: with him they are boys, *fanciulli ignudi*,* very human boys, which, though winged and stationed on a font, were boys first and angels afterwards. And he overcame the immense technical difficulties which childhood presents. The model is restive and the form is immature, the softness of nature has to be rendered in the hardest material. The lines are inconsequent, and the limbs do not yet show the muscles on which plastic art can usually depend. Nothing requires more deftness than to give elasticity to a form which has no external sign of vigour. So many sculptors failed to master this initial difficulty—Verrochio, for instance. He made the bronze fountain in the Palazzo Pubblico, and an equally fine statue of similar dimensions now belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus. Both have vivacity and move-

* Contract with Domopera of Siena. Payment for wax, for making the bronze figures for the Baptistery. 16, iv. 1428. Lusini, 38.

ment, but both have also a fat stubby appearance; the flesh has the consistency of pudding, and though soft and velvety in surface is without the inner meaning of the children on the Cantoria. In this work, where Donatello has carved some three dozen children, we have a series of instantaneous photographs. Nobody else had enough knowledge or courage to make rigid bars of children's legs: here they swing on pivots from the hip-joint. It is the true picture of life, rendered with superlative skill and *bravura*. But Donatello's children serve a purpose, if only that of decoration. At Padua they form a little orchestra to accompany the duets. The singing angels there are among the most charming of the company; and whether intentionally or not, they give the impression of having forgotten the time, or of being a little puzzled by the music-book! But Donatello fails to express the exquisite modulation by which Luca della Robbia almost gives actual sound to his Cantoria: where one sees the swelling throat, the inflated lungs, the effort of the higher notes, and the voice falling to reach those which are deep. Luca's children, it is true, are bigger and older; but in this respect he was unsurpassed, even by painters whose medium should have placed them beyond rivalry in such a respect. The choir of Piero della Francesca's Nativity is so well contrived that one can distinguish the alto from the tenor; but Luca was able to do even more. He gives cadence, rhythm and expression where others did no more than represent the voice. Donatello's dancing children are more important than his musicians. He was able to give free vein to his fancy. We have flights of uncontrollable children, romping and rioting, dashing to and fro, playing and laughing as they pass about garlands

Alinari

CANTORIA (DETAIL)

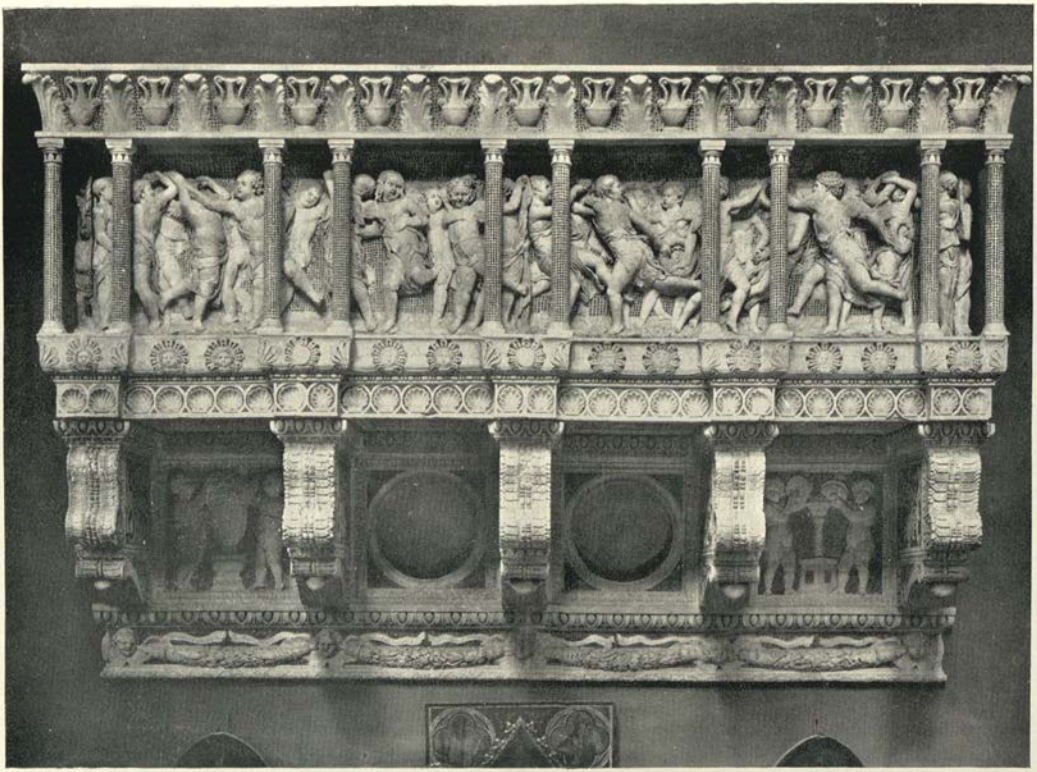
FLORENCE

among them. And their self-reliance is worth noticing; they are absorbed in their dance—children dance rather heavily—and only a few of them look outwards. There is no self-consciousness, no appeal to the spectator: they are immensely busy, and enjoy life to the full. Then we have a more demure type of childhood: they are shield-bearers on the Gattamelata monument, or occupy an analogous position on the lower part of the Cantoria. Others hold the cartel or epitaph as on the Coscia tomb. And again Donatello introduces children as pure decoration. The triangular base of the Judith, for instance, and the bronze capital which supports the Prato pulpit, have childhood for their sole motive. He smuggles children on to the croziers of St. Louis and Bishop Pecci: they are the supporters of Gattamelata's saddle: they decorate the vestments of San Daniele. They share the tragedy of the Pietà, and we have them in his reliefs. The entire frieze of the pulpits of San Lorenzo is simply one long row of children—some two hundred in all.

The Cantoria. The Cantoria, or organ-loft, of the Florentine Cathedral was ordered soon after Donatello's return from Rome, and was erected about 1441. It was placed over one of the Sacristy doors, corresponding in position with Luca della Robbia's cantoria on the opposite side of the choir. The ill-fortune which dispersed the Paduan altar and Donatello's work for the façade likewise caused the removal of this gallery. Late in the seventeenth century a royal marriage was solemnised, for which an orchestra of unusual numbers was required, and the two *cantorie* were removed as inadequate. The large brackets

remained *in situ* for some time, but were afterwards taken away also. The two galleries have now been re-erected at either end of the chief room of the Opera del Duomo. But the size of the galleries is considerable, and they occupy so much of the end walls to which they are fixed, that it is impossible to see the sides or outer panels of either cantoria. In the case of Luca's gallery, the side panels have been replaced by facsimiles, and the originals can be minutely examined, being only four or five feet from the ground, and very suggestive they are. As the side panels of Donatello's gallery are equally invisible in their present position they might also be brought down to the eye level. Comparison with Luca's work would then be still more simplified. But though in a trying light, and too low down, the sculpture shows that it was Donatello who gave the more careful attention to the conditions under which the work would be seen. The delicacy and grace of Luca's choir make Donatello's boys look coarse and rough-hewn. But in the dim Cathedral, where Donatello's children would appear bold and vivacious, the others would look insipid and weak. Moreover, the lower tier of Luca's panels beneath the projection and enclosed by the broad brackets, would have been in such a subdued light that some of the heads in low-relief would have been scarcely emphasised at all. In reconstructing Donatello's gallery an error has been made by which a long band of mosaic runs along the whole length of the relief, above the children's heads. M. Reymond has pointed out that the ground level should have been raised in order to prevent what Donatello would undoubtedly have avoided, namely, a blank and meaningless stretch of mosaic.* M. Reymond's brilliant suggestion

* Reymond, I., p. 107.



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CANTORIA

IN OPERA DEL DUOMO, FLORENCE

about a similar point in regard to the other cantoria, a criticism which has been verified in a remarkable manner, entitles his suggestion to great weight. The angles of the cantoria where the side panels join the main relief lack finish: something like the pilasters which cover the angles of the Judith base are required. As for the design, the gallery made by Luca della Robbia has an advantage over Donatello's in that the figures are not placed behind a row of columns. There is something tantalising in the fact that the most boisterous and roguish of all the troop is concealed by a pillar of spangled white and gold. These pillars were perhaps needed to break the long line of the relief: but they have no such significance, as, for instance, the row of pillars on the Saltarello tomb,* behind which the Bishop's effigy lies—a barrier between the living and the dead, across which the attendant angels can drop the curtain. Donatello's gallery is, perhaps, over-decorated. There is less gilding now than formerly, and the complex ornament does not materially interfere with the broad features of the design: but a little more reserve would not have been amiss.

The Prato Pulpit. The second work in which Donatello took his inspiration exclusively from childhood is at Prato. It is an external pulpit, fixed at the southern angle of the Cathedral façade, and employed to display the most famous relic possessed by the town, namely, the girdle of the Virgin. The first contract was made as early as 1428 with Donatello and Michelozzo, *industriosi maestri*, to whom careful measurements were given.† The sculptors

* By Nino Pisano, in Sta. Caterina, Pisa. † 14, vii. 1428.

promised to finish the work by September 1, 1429. Five years later, there was still no pulpit, and having vainly invoked the aid of Cosimo, they finally sent to Rome, where Donatello had by then gone, and a revised contract was made with the industrious sculptors, though Michelozzo is not mentioned by name.* The work was finished in about four years, and within three weeks of signing the new contract one of the reliefs was completed; it may, of course, have been already begun. Its success was immediate. "All say with one accord that never has such a work of art been seen before;" and the writer of the entertaining letter from which this eulogy is quoted goes on to say that Donatello is of good disposition; that such men are not found every day, and that he had better be encouraged by a little money.† The Prato pulpit has seven marble reliefs on mosaic grounds, separated by twin pilasters: there are thirty-two children in all.‡ It is a most attractive work, cleverly placed against the decorous little Cathedral and not surrounded by sculpture of the first order with which to make invidious comparisons. But beside the cantoria it is almost insignificant. The Prato children dance too, but without the perennial spring; they have plenty of movement, but seem apt to stumble. They do not scamper along with the feverish enthusiasm of the other children: they must get very tired. Moreover, several of the panels are confused. They are, of course, crowded, for Donatello liked crowds, especially for his children; but his crowds were well marshalled and the individual figures which composed

* 27, v. 1434.

† Letter from Matteo degli Orghani, printed with the other documents in C. Guasti, opere, iv. 463–477.

‡ A pair of terracotta variants of these panels are preserved in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House.

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THE PRATO PULPIT

them were not allowed to suffer by their surroundings anatomically. The Prato children belong to a chubby and robust type. They have a tendency to short necks and unduly big heads which sink on to the torso. Michelozzo never grasped the spirit of childhood; those at Montepulciano were not a success, and he was largely responsible for the Prato Pulpit; it has been suggested that Simone Ferrucci also assisted. Certainly it would be Michelozzo's idea to divide the frieze into compartments, which interrupt the continuity of the relief and necessitate fourteen terminal points instead of four on the cantoria. We can also detect Michelozzo's hand in the rather stiff and professional details of the architecture. But he seems to have also executed some of the reliefs, even if the general idea from which he worked should have been Donatello's. Thus the panel most remote from the cathedral façade is involved in design and faulty in execution; and the children's expression is aimless and dull. But it must not be inferred that the Prato Pulpit is in any sense a failure, or even displeasing. Its popularity is thoroughly well deserved. The test of comparison with the cantoria is most searching, too severe indeed, for such a high standard could not be maintained. But if the *capo d'opera* of sculptured child-life be excluded, the Prato Pulpit will always retain a well-deserved popularity. Two further points should be noted. Below the pulpit is a bronze relief, shaped like the capital of a large column. There should be two of them, and it used to be believed that the second was destroyed in 1512 when the Spanish troops sacked the town. But the story is apocryphal, for the documents show that payment was only made for one relief, and that Michelozzo was entirely responsible for the

casting. It is a most decorative panel, the motive being ribands and wreaths, among which there are eleven winged *putti* of different sizes. At the top of the capital is a big baby in high-relief peeping over the edge; an exquisite fancy reminding us of the two inquisitive children clambering over the heraldic shields on the Pecci monument. On the base of the capital are two other *putti* of equal charm, winged like the rest, and sedately looking outwards in either direction. The volutes of the bronze are decorated with other figures, less boyish and almost suggesting the touch of Ghiberti, who, it may be remarked, was appointed assessor of the contract by the Wardens of the Girdle. Finally, one may inquire what Donatello's motive can have been in designing the frieze: what may be the relation of the sculpture to the precious Girdle. No conclusive answer can be given. In the organ-loft of Luca della Robbia the object was to show praise of the Lord "with all kinds of instruments"*: Donatello's was to "let them praise his name in the dance."† At Prato we have dance and music for no apparent reason, except perhaps as a display of joyfulness appropriate to the great festival of exhibiting the *Cingolo*. It is possible that the curious little reliquary in which the Girdle is actually preserved may supply the clue to some legend or tradition connected with the relic. This *cofanetto* was remodelled about this time, and the primitive motive and design may have been impaired. But we have a series of winged *putti* made of ivory, who dance and play about much as those on the pulpit, but amongst whom one can see scraps of rope, signifying the Girdle, from which they derive their incentive to joy and vivacity.

* Psalm cl. † Psalm cxlix.

Other Children by Donatello.

There are six *putti* above the Annunciation in Santa Croce. They are made of terra-cotta, while the rest of the work is in stone, and designed in such a way that the children are superfluous. They are, however, undoubtedly by Donatello, and may have been added as an afterthought. Two stand on either side of the curved tympanum, clinging to each other as they look downwards, and afraid of falling over the steep precipice. Their attitude is shy and timid, as Leonardo said was advisable when making little children standing still.* Though unnecessary, their presence on the relief is justified by Donatello's skill and humour. In the great reliefs at Padua, Siena and Lille he introduces them without any specific object, though he contrives that they shall show fear or surprise in response to the incident portrayed. It is puzzling to know what the bronze boy in the Bargello should be called. Perseus, Mercury, Cupid, Allegory and Amorino have been suggested: he combines attributes of them all together with the budding tail of a faun, and the *gambali*, the buskin-trouser of the Tuscan peasant†—"*vestito in un certo modo bizzarro*," as Vasari says. Cinelli thought it classical, and it resembles an undoubted antique in the Louvre. Donatello has clearly taken classical motives; the winged feet and the serpents twining between them are not Renaissance in form or idea. But the statue itself is closely akin to the Cantoria children, but being in bronze shows a higher polish, and, moreover, is treated in a less summary fashion. It is a brilliant piece of bronze:

* "Trattato della Pintura," Richter, i. 291.

† This open form of trouser, of which one sees a variant on the Martelli David, was also classical. The Athis or Phrygian shepherd usually wears something of the kind.

colour, cast and chiselling are alike admirable, and there is a vibration in the movement as the saucy little fellow looks up laughing, having presumably just shot off an arrow; or possibly he has been twanging a wire drawn tightly between the fingers. It throws much light on the bronze boys at Padua made ten or fifteen years later. This Florentine boy shows how completely Donatello, perhaps with the assistance of a caster, could render his meaning in bronze. In two or three cases at Padua the work is clumsy and slipshod, showing how he allowed his assistants to take liberties which he would never have countenanced in work finished by his own hands. The Bargello has another Amorino of bronze, a nude winged boy standing on a cockleshell, and just about to fly away; quite a pleasing statuette, and executed with skill except as regards the extremities of the fingers, where the bronze has failed. It resembles Donatello's *putti* who play and dance on the corners of the tabernacle of Quercia's font at Siena; but the base of this figure differs from that of the other four. A fifth of the Sienese *putti* was recently bought in London for the Berlin Gallery, an invaluable acquisition to that growing collection.* This group, however, is less important than the wonderful pair of bronze *putti* belonging to Madame André.† These are much larger: they carry candle-sockets and are lightly draped with a few ribands and garlands: judging from the way they are huddled up, it is possible that they formed part of a larger work. They appear to be a good deal later than the Cantoria,

* Very similar classical types are in the British Museum, No. 1147; and the Eros springing forward in the Forman Collection (dispersed in 1899) is almost identical.

† From the Piot Collection. Figured in "Gaz. des Beaux Arts," 1890, iii. 410.

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BRONZE AMORINO

BARGELLO

though they do not show any technical superiority to the large Bargello Amorino; but they have not quite got that freshness which cannot be dissociated from work made between 1433 and 1440. Madame André has another superb Donatello—a marble boy: his attitude is unbecoming, but the modelling of this admirable statue—the urchin is nearly life-sized—is almost unequalled. There is a similar figure in the Louvre made by some imitator. It need hardly be said that Donatello's children, especially the free-standing bronze statuettes, were widely copied. According to Vasari, Donatello designed the wooden *putti* carrying garlands in the new Sacristy of the Duomo. There are fourteen of these boys, and they overstep the cornice like Michelozzo's angels in the Capella Portinari at Milan. Donatello may have given the sketch for one or two, but there is a lack of intelligence about them, besides a certain monotony. Moreover, it is improbable that Donatello would have designed garlands so bulky that they threaten to push the little boys who carry them off the cornice. In spite of its faults, this frieze is charming. The *naïveté* of the quattrocento often invests its errors with attraction. It would be wearisome to catalogue the scores of bronze children which show undoubted imitation of Donatello. They exist in every great collection, one of exceptional merit being in London.* A large school sprang into existence, chiefly in Padua and Venice, whence it spread all over Northern Italy, and produced any number of bronze works which recall one or other feature of Donatello's children. But they never approached Donatello. Their work was a sort of *minuteria*

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 475, 1864. A winged boy carrying a dolphin.

—table ornaments, plaquettes, inkstands, and the ordinary decoration of a sitting-room. Monumental childhood almost ceased to exist in Italian plastic art, and, after Michael Angelo, degenerated into stout and prosperous children lolling in clouds and diving among the draperies which adorned the later altars and tombs. Their didactic value was soon lost to Italian sculpture, and with it went their inherent grace and significance. Donatello was among the first as he was among the last seriously to apply to sculpture the words *ex ore infantium perfecisti laudem.*

Boys' Busts. It is inexplicable that modern criticism should withdraw from Donatello all the free-standing or portrait-busts of boys, while going to the opposite extreme in ascribing to him an enormous number of Madonnas. We know that Donatello was passionately fond of carving children on his reliefs: we also know that only two versions of the Madonna can be really authenticated as his work. Why should Donatello have made no busts of boys when it is not denied that he was responsible for something like one hundred boys in full-length; and how does it come about that scores of Madonnas should be attributed to him when we only have the record of a few? There can be no doubt that Donatello would not have rested content with children in relief or in miniature. The very preparation of his numerous works in this category must have led him to make busts as well, quite apart from his own inclinations. The stylistic method of argument should not be abused: if driven to a strict and logical conclusion it becomes misleading. It ignores the human element in the artist. It pays no attention to his desire to vary the nature of his

work or to make experiments. It eliminates the likelihood of forms which differ from the customary type, and it makes no allowance for possibilities or probabilities, least of all for mistakes. It is purely on stylistic grounds that each bust connected with Donatello's name has been withdrawn from the list of his works. A fashion had grown up to ascribe to Donatello all that delightful group of marble busts now scattered over Europe. Numbers were obviously the work of competent but later men: Rossellino, Desiderio, Mino da Fiesole, and so forth. There remain others which are more doubtful, but which in one detail or another are alleged to be un-Donatellesque, and have therefore been fearlessly attributed to other sculptors from whose authenticated work they often dissent. That, however, was immaterial, the primary object being to disinherit Donatello without much thought as to his lawful successor in title. A critical discrimination between these busts was an admitted need; everything of the kind had been conventionally ascribed to Donatello just as Luca della Robbia was held responsible for every bit of glazed terra-cotta. These ascriptions to the most fashionable and lucrative names had become conventional, and had to be destroyed. Invaluable service has been rendered by reducing the number given to Donatello and adding to the number properly ascribed to others. But the process has gone too far. The difficulties are, of course, great, and stylistic data offer the only starting-point; but as these data are readily found by comparison with Donatello's accepted work, it ought to be possible, on the fair and natural assumption that Donatello may well have made such busts, to determine the authenticity of a certain proportion. In any case, it would be less difficult to prove that Donatello did, than that he did not

make statues of this description. Among the busts of very young boys which cannot be assigned to Donatello are those belonging to Herr Benda in Vienna, and to M. G. Dreyfus in Paris. Nothing can exceed their softness and delicacy of modelling, and they are among the most winning statuettes in the world. They were frequently copied by Desiderio and his *entourage*. One of the little heads in the Vanchettoni Chapel at Florence is likewise animated by a similar exemplar. There is something girlish about them, a pursuit of prettiness which is no doubt the source of their singular attraction, and which invests them with an irresistible charm. The San Giovannino, also in the Vanchettoni, is a more concrete version of childhood, but is by the same hand as its fellow. These four busts fail to characterise the child's head; not indeed that characterisation was needed to make an enchanting work, but that Donatello's children elsewhere show more of the individual touches of the master and personal notes of the child. The Duke of Westminster possesses a life-sized head of a boy,* which is palpably by Donatello, though no document exists to prove it. We have all the essentials of Donatello's modelling; the handling is uncompromising and firm; the child is treated more like a portrait. Indeed, many of these children's busts, even when symbolised by St. John's rough tunic, were avowed portraits—the Martelli San Giovannino, for instance, which from Vasari's time has been ascribed, and probably with justice, to Donatello. This little head enjoys a reputation which it scarcely deserves. The expression is dull, the hair grows so low that scarcely any forehead is visible; the cheeks bulge out,

* In Grosvenor House. Bronze; generally known as "The Laughing Boy."

Alinari

SAN GIOVANNINO

FAENZA MUSEUM

and the mouth is too small. We have, in fact, a lifelike presentment of some boy, perhaps of the Martelli family, showing him at his least prepossessing moment, when the bloom of childhood has passed away, and before the lines have been fined down and merged into the stronger contours of youth. Desiderio would have improved Nature by modifying the boy's features, and we should have had a work comparable to those previously mentioned. But Donatello (and perhaps his patrons) preferred a less idealised version. The Martelli figure, and a most important boy's bust belonging to Frau Hainauer in Berlin, are now usually ascribed to Rossellino. But his St. John in the Bargello, where all the features are softened down, and his authenticated work in San Miniato and elsewhere, make the attribution open to question. The St. John at Faenza is also denied to be by Donatello; one of the critics who is quite certain on the point believes the bust to be made of wood! These problems cannot be settled by spending ten *lire* on photographs. The bust at Faenza,* though a faithful portrait, is one of the most romantic specimens of childhood depicted by Donatello. Admirably modelled, and with a surface like ivory, it gives the intimate characteristics of the model. Nothing has been embellished or suppressed, if we may judge from the absolute sequence and correspondence of all the features. The flat head, the projecting mouth, and the much-curved nose, are sure signs of accurate and painstaking observation; they combine to give it a personal note which adds much to its abstract merits. The

* Its proportion is impaired by the basal drapery, which was grafted to the statue at a later date. This bust belonged to Sabba da Castiglione, who was very proud of it. He was born within twenty years of Donatello's death.

St. John in the Louvre* is also a portrait, but of an older boy, in whom the first signs of maturity are faintly indicated: lines on the forehead, a stronger neck, and a harder accentuation of nose and mouth. But he is still a boy, though he will soon go forth into the wilderness. By the side of the Faenza Giovannino he would appear rough; beside the Vienna and Dreyfus statuettes he would be harsh and unsympathetic. He has no smiling countenance, no fascinating twinkle of the eye: the type has not been generalised as in Desiderio's work, and it therefore lacks those qualities, the very absence of which makes it most Donatellesque. The fundamental distinction between Donatello and the later masters can be emphasised by comparing this bust with another group of terra-cotta heads, which are analogous, although the boy in them is older. One in the Berlin Gallery† has been painted, and no final judgment can be passed until the more recent accretions of oil-colour have been removed. But the whole conception is weakly and vapid. The brown eyes, the nicely rouged cheeks, the mincing look, and the affectation of the pose make a genteel page-boy of him, and all suggest a later imitation—about 1470 perhaps—and contemporary with the somewhat analogous though better rendering in the Louvre.‡ The version belonging to M. Dreyfus differs in certain details from the Berlin bust, and it has been fortunate in escaping careless painting; it has more vigour and virility. One remark may be made about the Faenza, Grosvenor House, Martelli, Hainauer and Louvre busts: they all show a peculiarity in the treatment of the hair.

* No. 383. Marble. Goupil Bequest.

† Stucco, No. 38A. *Cf.* also one belonging to Herr Richard von Kaufmann, Berlin.

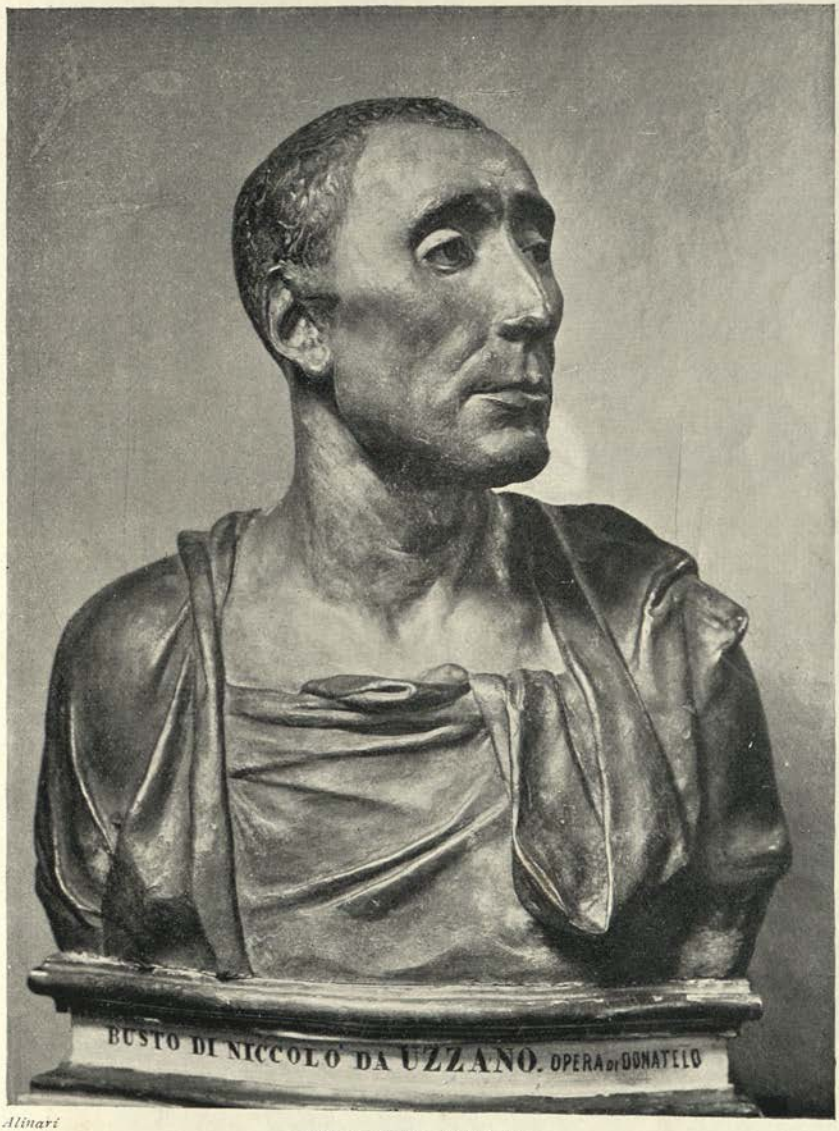
‡ No. 1274, St. John, Florentine School, a painting.

It is bunched together and drawn back from behind the ears, and is gathered on the nape of the neck, down which it seems to curl. This is precisely the treatment observed in the Mandorla relief, the Martelli David, the young Gattamelata, and the Amorino in the Bargello: in a lesser degree it is observable in the Isaac and the Siena Virtues. The point is not one upon which stress could properly be laid, but it is a further point of contact between Donatello's accepted work and some few out of the numerous boys' busts which he must inevitably have made.

Niccolò da Uzzano and Polychromacy.

The bust of Niccolò da Uzzano has gained its widespread popularity from its least genuine feature—namely, the paint with which it is disfigured. The daubs of colour give it a fictitious importance, an actual realism which invests it with the illusion of living flesh and blood. This is all the more unfortunate, as the bust is a remarkable work, and does not gain by being made into a "speaking likeness." Its merits can best be appreciated in a cast, where the form is reproduced without the dubious embellishments of later times. Niccolò was a high-minded patrician, an implacable opponent of the Medici, and a warm friend of higher education: it is also of interest that he should have been an executor of the will of John XXIII. He was born in 1359, and died in 1432. The bust is made of terra-cotta, and shows a man of sixty-five or so, and would therefore be coeval with the later Campanile prophets (but nothing beyond old tradition can be accepted as authority for the nomenclature). The modelling of the head is quite masterly. Niccolò is looking rather to

the left; his keen and hawklike countenance, and his piercing eyes, deep set and quivering within pendulous eyelids, give a sense of invincible logic and penetration. The laconic, matter-of-fact mouth, and the resolute jaw add strength and courage to the physiognomy: the nose and its disdainful nostrils are those of the haughty optimate. The head is, however, less fine than the face: a skull of rather common proportions, and a sloping though broad forehead are its marked features. Donatello has given him an ugly ear; Niccolò's ear was, therefore, ugly, and the throat is swollen. The shoulders are covered with a thick piece of drapery, leaving the throat and upper part of the breast bare. Such is the impression conveyed by Niccolò in the cast. In the Bargello the colouring modifies what the form itself was meant to suggest. The smallest error of a paint-brush, the slightest deepening of a pigment, are quite sufficient to make radical alterations in the sentiment of a statue. When applied to plastic art, colour is potent enough to change the essential purpose of the sculptor. The chief reason why the terra-cotta bust of St. John at Berlin looks flippant and fastidious is, that the painter was indiscreet in drawing the eyebrows and lips: owing to his carelessness, they do not coincide with the features indicated by the modeller, and the entire character of the boy is consequently changed. The question of polychromacy in Donatello's sculpture is of great importance, and requires some notice. It is no longer denied that classical statues were frequently coloured. The Parthenon frieze and many celebrated monuments of antiquity were picked out with colour. Others received some kind of polish, *circumlitio*,—like the dark varnish which is on the face of the Coscia effigy. Again, the use



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NICCOLÒ DA UZZANO

BARGELLO, FLORENCE

of ivory, precious stones, and metal was common. The lips and eyeballs were frequently overlaid by thin slabs of silver.* The origin of polychromacy, doubtless, dates back to the most remote ages. It was first needed to conceal imperfections, and to supply what the carver felt his inability to render. It connotes insufficiency in the form. The sculptor, of all people, ought to be able to see colour in the uncoloured stone: he ought to realise its warmth, texture and shades. Nobody has any right to complain that a statue is uncoloured: the substance and quality of the marble is in itself pleasing, but relative truth is all that is required in a portrait-bust. If one wants to know the colour of a man's eye, or the precise tint of his complexion, the painter's art should be invoked, but only where its gradations and subtleties can be fully rendered—on the canvas. Polychromacy is a mixture of two arts: it is one art trying to steal a march upon another art by producing illusion. That is why the pantaloon paints his face, and why the audience laughs: the spirit which tolerates painted statues ends by adorning them with necklaces. Donatello, whose sense of light and shade was acutely developed, least required the adventitious aid of colour. Polychromacy was to a certain extent justified on terra-cotta, to soften the toneless colour of the clay, and on wood it served a purpose in hiding the cracks of a brittle substance. Nowadays it is happily no more than a *refugium peccatorum*. There is, however, no doubt that in Donatello's day it was widely used, and used by Donatello himself. It began in actual need, then became a convention, and long survived: *il n'y a rien de plus respectable qu'un ancien abus*. During the fifteenth century

* *Cf.* Naples Museum, No. 5592.

statues were coloured during the highest proficiency of sculpture: buildings were painted,* and bronze was habitually gilded. Donatello's Coscia, and his work at Siena and Padua, still show signs of it. The St. Mark was coloured, and the Cantoria was much more brilliant with gold than it is now. The St. Luke, which was removed from Or San Michele,† has long been protected from the weather, and still shows traces of a rich brocade decorated with coloured lines. The Christ of Piero Tedesco on the façade of the Cathedral had glass eyes. Roland and Oliver, two wonderful creations on the façade of the Cathedral at Verona, had blue enamel eyes. The Apostles in the Church of San Zeno, in the same city, are exceptionally interesting, being one of the rare cases where the genuine colouring is visible, although it has been much worn. The early colourists used tempera;‡ as this perished, oil paint was substituted, and there are very few painted statues extant on which restoration has never taken place, and consequently where the original colour of the sculptor is intact. With repainting, the original artist disappears: even if the work is cast, the delicate tints of the first colouring must be impaired, and repainting follows. Thus the Niccolò da Uzzano is covered with inferior oil colour, and only in a few details can the primitive tempera be detected. The later addition creates the fictitious interest, and immensely reduces the real importance of this masterly production.

* *Cf.* drawings of façades in Vettorio Ghiberti's Note-book.

† Bargello Cortile, No. 3, by Niccolo di Piero.

‡ Borghini, in 1586, gave a curious recipe for colouring marble according to antique rules. Florentine ed. 1730, p. 123.

Portrait-busts. It is a singular fact admitting of no ready explanation that portrait-busts, so common in Tuscany, should scarcely have existed in Venice. Florence was their native home. From the time of Donatello every sculptor of note was responsible for one or more, while certain artists made it a regular occupation. Luca della Robbia, however, one of the most consummate sculptors of his day, made no portrait except the effigy of Bishop Federighi. There are one or two small heads in the Bargello, but they scarcely come within the category of studied portraits, while the heads on the bronze doors of the Duomo, though modelled from living people, are small and purely decorative in purpose. Glazed terra-cotta was a material so admirably adapted to showing the refinements of feature and character, as we can see in both Luca's and Andrea's work, that this absence is all the more surprising. At the same time, numerous as portrait-statues were in Tuscany, they do not compare in numbers with those executed in classical times. In the fifteenth century the statue was a work of art, and its actual carving was an integral part of the art: so the replica in sculpture was rare. But under the Roman Empire statues of the same man were erected in scores and hundreds in the same city; their multiplication became a profession in itself, and a large class of artisans must have grown up, eternally copying and recopying portrait-busts and giving them the haunting dulness of mechanical reproductions. The artist himself was more interested in the torso than the head; some artists came to be regarded as specialists in their own lines; Calcosthenes for instance, who made athletes, and Apollodorus, who made philosophers. Donatello made several portrait-busts, and two or three others, such

as the head of St. Laurence, and the so-called St. Cecilia in London, which are portraits in all essentials. These two are idealised heads, both made late in life, judging from a certain sketchiness, in no way detracting from their sterling qualities, but indicative of Donatello's fluency as an oldish man. Both are in terra-cotta. The St. Laurence is placed on the top of one of the great chests in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo, too high above the eye-level.* It has no connection with the decorative work carried out there by the master, and it is difficult to see how it could have been meant to fit in with the altar. However, the authorship of Donatello is beyond question. St. Laurence is almost a boy, wearing his deacon's vestments. His head is raised up as if he had just heard something and were about to reply. The eager and inquiring look is most happily shown. The sentiment of this bust is quite out of the common; it has an engaging expression which is rare in the sculpture of all ages, differing from what is called animation or vivacity. These also may be found in the St. Laurence, where the exact but indescribable movement of the face as he is about to speak is rendered with immense skill. The bust, though modelled with a free hand, is not carelessly executed; everything is in concord, and the treatment of the clay shows exceptional dexterity, more so, at any rate, than is the case in the St. Cecilia.† The name given to this bust is traditional, there being no symbol to connect it with her; but it suggests at least that the work was not meant purely as a portrait. In

* It used to be over one of the doors, preserved *in una custodia* which Richa thought ought to have been made of crystal, so precious was the bust.—"Ch. Fiorentine," 1758, v. 39.

† Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7585, 1861.

technique and conception it is not quite equal to the St. Laurence, but it is none the less a work of rare merit, and being Donatello's only clay portrait in this country has a special value to us. The Saint looks downwards, pensive, quiet and modest, the embodiment of tranquillity and calm. There is no movement or effort about her, neither does the work show any effort on the part of the sculptor. It is equable in a very marked degree; the smooth regular features are simple and well defined, and the hair, brushed back from the forehead, has a softness which could scarcely be obtained in marble. The bust known as Louis III. of Gonzaga is interesting in another way: it is bronze and has been left in an unfinished state. Two versions of it exist—one in Berlin, the other in Paris, belonging to Madame André, the latter being perhaps the less ugly of the two. It used to be known as Alfonso of Naples, on the assumption that Donatello must surely have made a bust of that prince. This theory, however, had to be abandoned, and it is now held to be a portrait of the Gonzaga as being a closer resemblance to him than to Alfonso, or Giovanni Tornabuoni. Mantegna's portrait of Gonzaga, though made later, shows a rather different type, less displeasing than the bronze. In the bust we have what is probably the portrait of a coarse and clumsy person; he is petulant in the mouth, weak in the chin, gross in the thick and heavy jaw. The bronze is extremely rough, and shows no signs of the nervous and individual touches which we find in Donatello's terra-cotta. Both the busts are unfinished; in the absence of chasing and hammering they are covered with bubbles and splotches of metal. They have, therefore, not passed through the hands of assistants, except so far as the actual casting of the

bronze was concerned. During the process of casting the refinements of a clay model would often be impaired, but this shows no sign of having been made from an original of merit. The man is ugly, it is true; but the broad expanse of his lifeless cheek and the bulbous forehead would in real life have been explained and justified by bone and muscle, which the sculptor would have rendered in his clay study. The ugliness of the man, however, is unrelated to the qualities of the bust. Nobody could make the likeness of an ugly man better than Donatello; and since the faults of this portrait lie more in the modelling than in the sitter, one is driven to conclude that the bust must be entirely the work of an assistant, or else a failure of the master.

An effective counterpart to this bust exists in Berlin. It is also a life-sized bronze of an older man, and in many ways the likeness to the Gonzaga bust is notable. But wherever Gonzaga's features lack distinction this portrait shows fine qualities and good breeding. Nothing could better illustrate how minute are the plastic details which will revolutionise a countenance; how easily noble and handsome features can degenerate into what is sordid and vulgar. In this bust the chin, though receding, is far from weak; the lips are full but not sensual; the nose has the faint aquiline curve of distinction. There is benevolence in the eyes, meditation in the brow, dignity and reserve throughout the physiognomy: it is the portrait of a man who may be great, but who must be good. When a bronze *abozzo* has to be finished the detail is added by hammering the metal, or incising it with gravers. Thus the bronze has to be reduced, it being seldom possible to enlarge it at any point. But the Gonzaga bust would require to be

enlarged in several places to make it a lifelike head. In the case of the portrait just described, the metal was cast from a rough sketch which, in the first place, had the qualities of a living and consistent head, and which, in the second place, was modelled with sufficient amplitude to permit the entire head to be hammered, and the exquisite details to be added. Technically this head is almost unequalled among Donatello's bronze portraits; it is quite superb. Comparison with the Gattamelata at Padua is fair to neither. But it can be suitably compared with the bronze portrait in the Bargello generally known as the Young Gattamelata. The tomb of Giovanni Antonio, son of the famous Condottiere, is in the Santo at Padua. The effigy resembles this bust. Giovanni died young in 1456, and on the whole there is sufficient reason for considering it to be his portrait. On this assumption the bust can be dated about 1455. It is a happy combination of youth and maturity. On the one side we have the smooth features, still unmarked by frowns and furrows, the soft youthful texture of the skin, and something young in the thick curly hair. On the other hand, the character of the face shows perfect self-confidence in its best sense, as well as self-control and determination. A scrap of drapery covers the outer edge of either shoulder, and round his neck is a riband, at the end of which hangs a large oval gem, Cupid in a chariot making his horses gallop. Thus the throat and breast are bare, and show exceptionally good rendering of those thin bones and thick tendons which must always be a severe test to the modeller. As for the bronze itself, the surface is wrought with much care and finish, though the Berlin bust is unapproached in this respect. A few other portrait-busts remain to be noticed, which at one

time or another have been attributed to Donatello. The Vecchio Barbuto, a thoroughly poor piece of work, and the Imperatore Romano* with its sadly disjointed and inconsequential appearance, are works which scarcely recall the touch of Donatello. The bust of a veiled lady is more interesting.† In the old Medici catalogue it used to be called *Donna velata incognita*, or *sacerdotessa velata:* and it was also called Annalena Malatesta: a suggestion has been recently made that it represents the Contessina de' Bardi, who married Cosimo de' Medici. Vasari certainly mentions a bronze bust of the Contessina by Donatello; but the family records would scarcely have called so important a person a nun or an *incognita:* moreover, she did not die till 1473, and as this bust is obviously made from a death-mask, it is clear that Donatello could not be its author. The custom of making death-masks is described by Polybius: in Donatello's time it became very popular, and Verrochio became one of the foremost men in this branch of trade, which combined expedition and accuracy with cheapness. The wax models were coloured and used as chimney-piece decorations, *in ogni casa di Firenze.* The bronze bust of San Rossore in the Church of Santo Stefano at Pisa has been attributed to Donatello. From the *denunzia* of 1427 we know that Donatello was occupied on a bust of the saint, and certain payments are recorded.‡ But beyond this fact there is no reason for assigning the Pisa bust to him. No explanation is offered of its removal from Florence to Pisa, and had we not known that Donatello made such a bust, this uncouth and slovenly thing would never have been ascribed to him. It is a reliquary, the

* Bargello, No. 18, and No. 6, life-sized bronze.
† Bargello, 17. ‡ Gaye, i. 121.

crown of the head being detachable, and the head can also be separated from the bust. It is heavily gilded and minutely chased with the trivial work of some meagre craftsman; the eyes seem to have been enamelled. It is merely interesting as a school-piece. Speaking generally, Donatello's portraits are less important as busts than when they are portions of complete statues. Excluding Niccolò da Uzzano and the old man at Berlin, the heads he made cannot compare with the portraits of John XXIII., Brancacci, Habbakuk and St. Francis at Padua. Donatello helped to lay the foundations of the tremendous school of portraiture which flourished after his death, both in sculpture and painting; based, in certain parts of Italy, on the principles he had laid down, though thriving elsewhere upon independent lines; such, for instance, as the remarkable group of portraits ascribed to Laurana or Gagini. But at his best Donatello rarely approached the comprehensive powers of Michael Angelo. With the latter we see the whole corpus or entity made the vehicle of portraiture; everything is forced to combine, and to concentrate the ἦθος of the conception; everything is driven into harmony. Michael Angelo gives a portrait which is also typical, while preserving the real. Donatello seldom got beyond the real; but he went far towards realising the highest forms of portraiture, and two or three of his works, though differing in standard from the Brutus or the Penseroso, surpass anything achieved by his contemporaries.

Relief-portraits. A few portraits in relief require a word of notice. As a rule they are later in date, though they are often given to Donatello. It became fashionable to have

one's portrait made as a Roman celebrity: an Antonine for instance; a Galba or a Faustina; or as some statesman, like Scipio or Cæsar. Donatello was not responsible for these portraits, though several have been attributed to him. But he made one or two such reliefs, such as the little St. John in the Bargello which has already been described. The oval-topped portrait in the same collection, made of pietra serena —a clean-shaved man with longish hair and an aquiline nose, is wrongly ascribed to Donatello. There is a much more interesting portrait, two copies of which exist; one is in London, the other in Milan.* It is a relief-portrait of a woman in profile to the right; her neck and breast are bare, treated similarly to the magnificent bust in the Bargello (177). The two reliefs, of which the Milan copy is oval, while ours is rectangular with a circular top, are modelled with brilliant and exquisite *morbidezza:* the undercutting is square, so that the shadows assert themselves; the wavy hair is brushed back and retained by a fillet, leaving the neck and temples quite free. In many ways it is the marble version of those portraits attributed to Piero della Francesca in the National Gallery† and elsewhere, but treated so that while the painting is curious the marble is beautiful. These reliefs cannot be traced to Donatello, though they show his style and influence in several particulars. Madame André has a marble relief of an open-mouthed boy crowned with laurels, and with ribands waving behind. It is very close to the Piot St. John in the Louvre, and analogous in some respects to two other reliefs of great interest, both in Paris, belonging respectively to La Marquise Arconati-

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 923, 1900, and Museo Archeologico, No. 1681, both marble.

† Nos. 585 and 758.

Visconti and to M. Gustave Dreyfus. These are marble reliefs of St. John and Christ facing each other, exquisite in their childhood. The former is round, the latter square. It is usual to ascribe them to Desiderio, and there are details which lead one to agree on the point. They show, however, that Donatello's influence was strong enough to survive his death in particulars which later men might well have ignored. And the two reliefs combine the strength of Donatello with the sweetness of Desiderio.

San Lorenzo. Donatello must have completed the most important decorative work in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo by 1443. Brunellesco was the architect, and there were differences between them as to their respective spheres of work. Donatello made the bronze doors, a pair of large reliefs, four large circular medallions of the Evangelists, as well as four others of scenes from the life of St. John the Evangelist. Excluding the doors, everything is made of terra-cotta. The reliefs over the inner doors of the Sacristy represent St. Stephen and St. Laurence on one side, and St. Cosmo and St. Damian on the other. They are nearly life size, modelled in rather low-relief upon panels with circular tops, and of exceptional size for works in terra-cotta. The reliefs are enclosed in Donatello's framework of latish Renaissance design, but the figures themselves are very simple. There is a minimum of ornament, and they harmonise with the remarkable scheme of the bronze doors below them, with which they have so many points in common. The ceiling of the chapel has been repeatedly whitewashed, and the eight medallions are consequently blurred in surface and outline. It is a real misfortune, for,

so far as one can judge, they contain compositions and designs of great interest, by which a new light would probably be thrown upon several doubtful problems were it possible to study them with precision. Criticism must therefore be guarded, and their position is such as to make examination difficult. The Roundels of the Evangelists are modelled with boldness and severity, qualities which one is not surprised to find in Donatello, but which are here emphasised, for they stand out in spite of the coats of whitewash. In some ways they resemble the Evangelists of the Capella Pazzi. Here one notices a delicacy of decoration on the seats, desks, &c., contrasting with the rugged grandeur of the figures themselves, and with the absence of ornament, which is so marked a feature of the other reliefs in the Sacristy. The four scenes from the life of St. John (Vasari says from the lives of the Evangelists) are even more interesting than the panels just mentioned. It appears from the few words Vasari devotes to the Sacristy that Donatello also painted views upon the ceiling, but no trace remains. The incidents depicted in the roundels are St. John's Apotheosis, Martyrdom, and Sojourn on Patmos, and the Raising of Drusiana. There are landscapes and architectural backgrounds; many figures are introduced, and there is a good deal of nude study. We also notice a feature of frequent occurrence—a trick of giving depth to the scene and vividness to the foreground, by letting figures be cut off short by the frames. Men seem to be standing on the spectator's side of the relief, and only appear at the point where they can be partly included in the composition. The field becomes one that would be included within the range of vision as seen through a round window or telescope. Mantegna made great use of this idea. The more

one looks at these eight medallions the more one regrets their present condition: washing is all that is required. If they could be carefully cleaned we would certainly find details of interest, and in all probability facts of importance. The frieze of angels' heads which surrounds the Sacristy is of secondary interest, as there are only two different cherubs, which are reproduced by moulds all along its entire length. Signs of gilding and colour are still visible. Pretty as they are, these angels cannot challenge comparison with the Pazzi frieze or with Donatello's similar work elsewhere—for instance, on the base of the Cantoria or upon the Or San Michele niche. The marble balustrade of the altar may have been designed by Donatello. The Sacristy shows how well adapted terra-cotta was for decoration on a large scale. But Donatello was too wise to cover the walls with his reliefs, as is the case in the Capella Pellegrini at Verona. Here the sculpture is used to decorate the chapel walls, there the walls are merely used to uphold the sculpture.

The Bronze Doors. There is no more instructive study than the bronze doors of Italian churches. They are the earliest specimens of bronze casting to be found in Italy of Christian times; they show the gradual transition from Eastern to Western forms of art, and they were usually made by the most prominent sculptor of the day. Their size is considerable, they are frequently dated, and their condition is often extraordinarily good. Donatello's are relatively small, but they adhere to the best traditions. Excluding the great doors made by Luca della Robbia for the Sacristy of the Duomo, these in San Lorenzo are

among the latest which were produced according to the ancient model and the correct idea. Thenceforward the doors ceased to be doors; the reliefs ceased to show the qualities of bronze, and disregarded the principles of sculpture. Donatello made two pairs of doors, one on either side of the altar. The doors open in the middle; there are thus four long-hinged panels of bronze, and each panel has five reliefs upon it. It is doubtful if the most archaic doors in Italy show such uniformity of design, for all the twenty bronze reliefs illustrate one single theme, namely, the conversation of two standing men. The panels simply consist of two saints, roughly sketched in somewhat low-relief upon an absolutely flat background: there is great variety in the drapery, and some of the figures might come out of thirteenth-century illuminations. Never was a monotonous motive invested with such variety of treatment: never was simplicity better attained by scrupulous elimination. Donatello's symmetrical idea had been previously employed, and Torrigiano put his figures in couples on what Bacon called one of the "stateliest and daintiest monuments of Europe."* Luca della Robbia put his figures in threes on the Cathedral gates, a seated figure in the centre, with a standing figure on either side. But Donatello had to make twice as many panels as Luca. Martyrs, apostles and confessors are talking on the San Lorenzo doors. Thus St. Stephen shows the stone of his martyrdom to St. Laurence. Elsewhere St. Peter's movement suggests that he is upbraiding his fellow, for the argument excites these saints. They gesticulate freely; martyrs seem to fence with their palm-leaves. One will turn away abruptly, another will pay sudden attention

* "Life of Henry VII.," ed. 1825, iii. 417.

Alinari

BRONZE DOORS

SAN LORENZO, FLORENCE

to his book, while his companion continues to talk. One man slaps his book to clinch the discussion, another jots down a note; two others are ending their controversy and prepare to leave—in opposite directions. But, though these are literal descriptions of the scenes, there is no levity; everything is ordained according to Donatello's strict formula. He was none the less determined to adhere to the old conventional and non-pictorial treatment of the gates, and at the same time to give animation to every panel. In this he has succeeded, but the symmetrical arrangement in pairs preserves a decorum in spite of the vigorous movement pictured on the doors. These doors open and shut: they were meant to do so, especially to shut. Ghiberti's second pair of doors for the Baptistery do not *shut:* they are closed, but they do not give the sense of shutting anything in or keeping anything out. They are more like windows than doors. They give no impression of defence or resistance: they are doors in nothing but name, and the chance that they hang on hinges. Were it merely a contest between Ghiberti and Donatello as to which sculptor were the more skilled constructor of doors, further comment would be unprofitable; but it raises the wider question of the laws and limitations of bas-relief—the application to sculpture of the principles of painting; in short, the broad line of demarcation between two different arts. Michael Angelo probably realised the unity of the arts better than Donatello, but Donatello knew enough to treat sculpture with due respect: he valued it too highly to confuse the issue by pictorial embellishments. It is no question of a convention, still less of a canon. But there are inherent boundaries between the two arts; and where the boundaries are overstepped, one or the

other art must lose some of its essential quality and charm. Donatello's reliefs at Padua are crowded: Ghiberti's (on the second gates) are overcrowded. The difference in degree produces a difference in principle. If Ghiberti had made pictures instead of reliefs, the atmosphere would keep the objects in their right places, while differences of colour would give distinction to certain parts and the chief figures would still predominate. In other reliefs Ghiberti lavished so much care on landscape and architecture that the figures become of secondary importance: on one relief a tree casts its shadow on a cloud.* Ghiberti, in fact, with all his plastic elegance, with a grace, suavity and sense of beauty which Donatello never approached, was a painter at heart. "*L'animo mio alla pittura era in grande parte volto*," he says in his Commentary,† and the faults of his sculpture are due to this versatility. Donatello only used his pictorial knowledge to perfect form and feature; and, complex as his architectural backgrounds often are, they never suggest experiments in perspective, and they never detract from the primacy of the people and the incident. Michael Angelo was under no illusion on this point: he never confused painting and sculpture. Yet he said Ghiberti's gates would be worthy portals of paradise. "*Ce n'est pas la seul sottise qu'on lui fasse dire*," drily remarked the Chevalier des Brosses;‡ and, curiously enough, about the time that Michael Angelo made his famous Judgment, an amateur of the day made a much shrewder criticism, long since forgotten, that the doors would be adequate to stand at the gates of Purgatory: —"*sarebbon bastanti a stare alle porte del Purgatorio.*"§

* See Westmacott's lectures on Sculpture, II. III., *Athenæum*, 1858.
† 2nd Comm. Vasari, I. xxx. ‡ Letter of 1739, p. 186.
§ 17, viii. 1549, Antonio Doni, printed in Bottari, iii. 341.

The ambiguity is not without humour. Sculpture, indeed, had no reason to ape or imitate painting. Sculpture, in fact, was in advance of painting during the first half of the fifteenth century. Donatello, Luca della Robbia, Jacopo della Quercia, and Ghiberti were greater men in sculpture than their contemporaries in painting. The arts were in rivalry; the claim for precedence was zealously canvassed. The sculptors claimed superiority because their art was older, because statuary has more points of view than one. You can walk round it, while a picture has only one light and one view. Moreover, the argument of utility applies most to sculpture, which can be used for tombs, columns, fountains, caryatides, &c. Sculpture has finality, for, though it takes longer to make, it cannot be constantly altered like a picture. While all arts try to imitate nature, sculpture gives the actual form, but painting only its semblance. A man born blind has a sense of touch which gives him pleasure from sculpture, which is better suited to theology, which has greater durability, and so forth. The painter replied that, if a statue has more than one point of view, a picture containing many figures can give even greater variety. Then the argument of utility denies the essence of art, which is to imitate nature, not to adorn brackets and pilasters; but even if decoration be an end in itself, painting can be used where sculpture would be too heavy. The painter continues that his art requires higher training in such things as atmosphere and perspective. As to the greater durability of sculpture, the material and not the art is responsible; but, in any case, painting lasts long enough to be worth achieving. Finally, sculpture cannot always imitate nature: the sense of colour can make a sunset, a storm at sea,

moonlight, landscape and human emotions, which are best translated by varying colour and light. The controversy is unsettled to this day.* The wise man, like Donatello, selected his art and never overstepped the boundary.

The Judith. The bronze statue of Judith was probably made shortly before Donatello's journey to Padua. It is his only large bronze group, and its faults are accentuated by the most unfortunate position it occupies in the lofty Loggia de' Lanzi. It was meant to be the centrepiece of some large fountain. The triangular base, and the extremities of the mattress on which Holofernes sits, have spouts from which the water would issue, though the bronze is not worn away by the action of water. As we see the statue now, it looks small and dwarfed. In a courtyard it would look far more imposing, and when it came from Donatello's workshop, placed upon a pedestal designed for it, its present incongruities would have been absent. For instance, the feet of Holofernes would have been upheld by something from below, as the marks in the bronze indicate. With all its disadvantages, the statue is extremely interesting. Judith stands over Holofernes. With her left hand she holds him up by clutching his hair: her right arm is uplifted, in which she holds the sword. The action seems arrested during a moment of suspense: one doubts if the sword will ever fall. Judith, who was the ideal of courage and beauty, seems to hesitate; there is nothing to show that her arm is meant to descend,

* These dialogues will be found at great length in Borghini, Vasari, Leonardo da Vinci, Alberti, &c. Castiglione also devotes a canto of the "Cortegiano" to the subject.

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JUDITH

LOGGIA DEI LANZI, FLORENCE

except her inexorable face—and even that is full of sadness and regrets. It is more dramatic that this should be so. Cellini's Perseus close by has already committed his murder. The crisis has passed, the blood spurts from the severed head and trunk of the Medusa; so we have squalid details instead of the overpowering sense of impending tragedy. With Cellini there was no room for mystery: no imagination could be left to the spectator. "*Celui qui nous dict tout nous saousle et nous dégouste.*" Holofernes is an amazing example of Donatello's power. He is a really drunken man: we see it in the comatose fall of the limbs, in the drooping features, the languid inanition of the arms. The veins throb in his hands and feet: the spine has ceased to be rigid, and were it not for the support of Judith's hands buried in his hair, he would topple over inanimate. The treatment of the bronze is successful and its patina is admirable. Judith's drapery, it is true, has a restless crackling appearance. It is furrowed into small and rather fussy folds, almost suggesting, like the figures of the Parthenon pediment, the pleats of wetted linen on a lay figure. Judith's arm is overweighted by the heavy sleeve. There are, however, pleasing details, especially the band of embroidery over her breast decorated with the flying *putti;* and her veil, Michael Angelesque in its way, is treated with skill and distinction. The base consists of three bronze reliefs joined into a triangle, separated at each angle by a narrow bronze plaque, beyond which is a curved pilaster giving extra support to the figures above. These reliefs are bacchic in idea and Renaissance in execution. Children dance, play and sleep around the mask from which the jet of water would issue. These reliefs, much inferior to the bronze capital at Prato, have been over-

rated. As a group the Judith is not really successful. It is a pile of figures, less telling in some ways than the Abraham and Isaac, though, having no niche, it has to undergo the severer test of criticism from every aspect. But before Michael Angelo the Italian free-standing group was tentative. Even in Michael Angelo's sculpture, when we consider its massive scale, the extent and number of his commissions, and the ease with which he worked his material, it is astonishing how few free-standing groups were made. His grouping was applied to the relief. The free group is, of course, the most comprehensive vehicle of intensified emotion or action; it gives an opportunity of doubling or trebling the effect on the spectator. Sculpture has never realised to the full the chances offered by grouped plastic art of heroic proportions. Classical groups cannot be fairly judged by the Laocoon, the Farnese Bull, or even the Niobe reliefs. Their theatrical character is so patent, that it is obvious how far inferior they must be to the work of greater men whose genuine productions have perished. But, even so, the group being the medium through which emotions could be intensified to the uttermost, it is not necessary to assume that they were common in classical times; partly owing to the technical difficulties and expense, and partly owing to their disinclination to make sculpture interpret profound impressions, mental or intellectual.

There are only four life-sized statues of women by Donatello: this Judith, the Magdalen, the St. Justina, and the Madonna at Padua. The Dovizia is lost, and she was treated as an emblematic personage. These figures and the statuettes at Siena show that, although not accustomed to make female statues, Donatello was perfectly competent to do so. The little Eve, on the back of the

Madonna's throne at Padua—the only nude figure of a woman he ever made, and here only in relief—is exquisite in sentiment and form. The statue of Judith had an adventurous life. After the revolution in 1495, the group was removed from the Medici palace to the Ringhiera of the Palazzo Pubblico, and the words of warning against tyranny were engraved on its new base: "*Exemplum salutis publicæ cives posuere*, 1495." Judith was the type of nationalism, the heroine of a war of independence: and this mark of the Florentine love of liberty has lasted to our own day. No Medici dared to obliterate the ominous words. Donatello was not much in politics: his father had taken too violent a share in the feuds of his day, and narrowly escaped execution. Nor was Donatello's art coloured by politics: the Florentines did not give commissions like the Sienese for allegorical representations of the life and duties of citizenship. Differing from Michael Angelo, Donatello made no Brutus; he did not concentrate the political tragedies of his day into a Penseroso and a group of statues full of grave symbolical protests against the statecraft of his time; and, except for the accidental loss of Judith's pedestal, Donatello's art never suffered from the curse of politics. Michael Angelo was always surrounded by the pitfalls of intrigue and politics: some of his work was sacrificed in consequence. The colossal statue of Pope Julio was hurled from its place on the façade of San Petronio, Maestro Arduino the engineer, having covered the ground where it was to fall with straw and fascines, in order that no damage should be done—to the pavement! And the broken statue was sent away to Ferrara, where it was converted into a big cannon, which they felicitously christened Juliana! *

* Gotti, "Vita," i. 66.

The Magdalen and similar Statues.

We have now to consider a group of rugged statues differing in date but animated by the same motive, the Magdalen in Florence and three statues of St. John the Baptist in Siena, Venice, and Berlin. Of these, the Magdalen in the Baptistery at Florence is the most typical and the most uncompromising. She stands upright, a mass of tattered rags, haggard, emaciated, almost toothless. Her matted hair falls down in thick knots; all feminine softness has gone from the limbs, and nothing but the drawn muscles remain. It is a thin wasted form, piteous in expression, painful in all its ascetic excess. The Magdalen has, of course, been the subject of hostile criticism. It gives a shock, it inspires horror: it is an outrage on every well-clothed and prosperous sinner.* In point of fact, Donatello's summary method of carving the wood has given a harshness and asperity to features which in themselves are not displeasing. In a dimmed light, or looking with unfocused eyes on the reproduction, it is clear that the structural lines of the face were once well favoured. But from the beginning the Magdalen was a work which made a profound impression, and its popularity is measured by the number of statues of a like nature. Charles VIII. wanted to buy it in 1498, but the Florentines thought it priceless and hid it away. Two years later they had the bronze diadem added by Jacopo Sogliani.† Finally, at a period when this type of sculpture with all its appeal to the traditions

* Rumour was very severe. "*Elle m'a pour toujours dégoûte de la pénitence,*" sighed Des Brosses. This inimitable person was the critic who, after visiting the Arena chapel at Padua, observed that nowadays one would scarcely employ Giotto to paint a tennis-court.

† Richa, III., xxxiii.

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ST. MARY MAGDALEN

BAPTISTERY, FLORENCE

of the Thebaid, was least likely to have been acceptable in art or exemplar, the statue was placed in a niche above an altar erected on purpose for its reception, where an inscription testifies to the regard in which it was then held.* This Magdalen is didactic in purpose. Donatello seems to have given less attention to the modelling, subtle as it is, than to the concentration of the one absorbing lesson which was to be conveyed to the spectator. His object was to show repentance, abject unqualified remorse; purified by suffering, refined by bodily hardship, and sustained by the "sun of discipline and virtue." There is no luxury in this Magdalen, but she may have contributed to the reaction when Pompeo Battoni and the like transformed her into an opulent personage, dressed in purple, who reclines in some luscious glade while simpering over a bible. By then art had ceased to know how penitence could be decently portrayed, and the penitent was not long a genuine subject of art. The Greeks, of course, had no penitent or ascetic in their theocracy: even the cynic scarcely found a place in their art. In Italy the Thebaids of Lorenzetti are among the earliest versions; the sculpture of the following century brought it still more home to the public, and then the true mediæval sentiment upon which this and similar works were founded vanished and has never reappeared. The date of the Magdalen has provoked a good deal of controversy: whether it was made immediately before or after the visit to Padua cannot be determined. But the statue has so many features in common with the Siena Baptist of 1457 that one can most safely ascribe it to some date after Donatello's return to Florence. It is

* The inscription is: "Votis publicis S. Mariæ Magdalenæ simulacrum ejus insigne Donati opus pristino loco elegantiario repositum anno 1735."

certainly more easy to justify the Magdalen from the pulpits of San Lorenzo than from anything made before his journey to Northern Italy. One misapprehension may be removed. It is argued that the Magdalen cannot be posterior to Padua on the ground that by 1440 Donatello had ceased to work in any material but soft and ductile clay, which was converted into bronze by his assistants. The argument is that of one who probably thinks that the Entombment at Padua is made of terra-cotta, and who forgets that Donatello executed a number of works in stone for the Marchese Gonzaga about 1450.*

The statues of St. John at Siena, Berlin, and Venice † are closely analogous to the Magdalen. St. John is the ascetic prophet who spent years in seclusion, returning from the desert to preach repentance. These three figures have one curious feature in common—a flavour of the Orient. The St. John is some fakir, some Buddhist saint. Asiatic as the Baptist was, it is seldom that Italian art gave him so Eastern a type; but the explanation is simply that Donatello evolved his own idea of what a self-centred and fasting mystic would resemble, and his conception happens to coincide with the outcome of similar conditions actually put into practice elsewhere. The Berlin bronze is St. John as Baptist, the others show him with the scroll as Precursor. He always wears the camel's-hair tunic, which ends just below the knee; at Siena it is thick, like some woolly fleece; it conceals and broadens the frame, thus suggesting a stoutness which is not warranted by the

* See p. 199. Moreover, in 1458 Donatello accepted a commission at Siena for a marble San Bernardino. And the Anonimo Morelliano mentions four other marble reliefs at Padua.

† Siena Cathedral, bronze; Berlin Museum, bronze; Frari Church, Venice, wood.

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ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

FRARI CHURCH, VENICE

size of the leg. The modelling of legs and arms in these statues is noteworthy. They are thin, according to Donatello's idea of his subject; and though the thinness takes the natural form of slender circumference, one sees that the limb with its angular modelling and its flat surfaces has *become* thin: the thinness is explained by the character. The feet of the Siena bronze are exceptionally good; the wrist and forearm of the Venice figure are admirable. The Siena Baptist is nearly life-sized, and was made in 1457. He is the least introspective of the three, a mature strong man, and the oldest of the many Baptists Donatello made. The Berlin figure is the flushed eccentric, holding up the cup he used in baptizing. The figure is half the size of life, and was doubtless one of the numerous statuettes which crowned fonts. It has been suggested that this bronze, which is defective in several places, was Commissioned for the Cathedral of Orvieto in 1423.* But the type would appear more advanced than the busts on the Mandorla doorway or the Siena work made about this time. Moreover, the contract specifies a St. John *cum signo crucis et demonstratione ecce agnus Dei.* A Baptist was made at the same time for Ancona, and is now lost. On first seeing the St. John in Venice one's impression is to laugh. But he is not really a wild man of the woods—he is simply covered with and made grotesque by thick masses of oil paint. A close examination of the figure shows that in some places the paint is over a quarter of an inch thick, and the last coating it has received is glutinous in quality, and has been laid on with such freedom that the position and shape of certain features are

* 10, ii. 1423. On 29, iv. 1423, Donatello received 5 lbs. 3 oz. of wax for modelling the figure. Luzi, "Duomo di Orvieto," 1867, p. 406.

altered. But if seen close at hand, the statue (which it is understood will shortly be cleaned) shows distinct merits. The modelling of the extremities is good, and though it is clear that Donatello was never quite willing to treat St. John as on a par with the other Saints, we have a systematic and generic rendering of his idea. In some measure painting was needed as a preservative for wood statues, otherwise it is difficult to justify the covering of a fine material by paint which cannot do justice to itself, while it must hide the refinements of the carving. Donatello worked but little in wood. Crucifixes were commonly made of it, but the material was one which could never receive *quella carnosità* and *morbidezza** of marble or metal. The Greeks limited their use of it to garden and woodland themes: the Egyptians used it but little, because they had so few trees. In Donatello's time it was popular, and came to be regarded as a distinct art. Thus the Sienese wood-carvers were forbidden to work in stone,† but the great masters like Donatello did not strictly adhere to the rules, and did not refrain from invading the art of the wood-carver. There is a large class of statues derived from the four just described. One of these, attributed to Donatello, is the St. Jerome at Faenza, also made of wood.‡ Chocolate-coloured paint has been ladled all over the body. The beard is faint lavender, and the canvas loin-cloth is blue. The pose and expression are mannered. It is usual to dismiss it in an offhanded way as a bad and later work;

* Vasari, i. 147.

† *Che niuno maestro di legname possa fare di pietra.* Rules of Sculptors of Sienna, 1441, ch. 39. Milanesi, i. 120.

‡ In Museum. From the Capella Manfredi in San Girolamo degli Osservanza outside the town, suppressed in 1866. *Cf.* two similar statuettes in terra-cotta, Bargello, Nos. 174 and 175.

but the modelling shows signs of skill, and until the paint is removed it is useless to make guesses. Two bronze statuettes of the Baptist* are distinctly Donatellesque, and made about 1450, though it is impossible to assign them with certainty to the master himself. Michelozzo's versions of St. John at Montepulciano, on the Cathedral altar in Florence, and in the Annunziata, show the influence of Donatello; but the Baptist is a milder prophet, and no longer the hermit. In the Scalzi at Florence there is a Baptist which is typical of many others of the same character. The Magdalen was less copied than the St. John. The version nearest Donatello himself is in London, a large grim bust; † in the same collection is a relief of her apotheosis, and the Louvre possesses a similar work.‡ Neither of the latter is by Donatello himself, but they recall his influence. § The large Magdalen in Santa Trinità at Florence is a good example of the *bottega*.

The Altar at Padua. Donatello was fifty-seven when he left Florence in 1443 to spend ten eventful years at Padua. There he carried out his masterpieces of bronze for the Cathedral and the equestrian statue of Gattamelata on the Piazza opposite Donatello's little house, which to this day is occupied, appropriately enough, by a carver—Bortolo Slaviero, *tagliapietra*. It is now established

* Louvre, about 12 inches high, unnumbered. Museo Archeologico, Venice, No. 8. Frau Hainauer's bronze Baptist, signed by Francesco di San Gallo, is interesting in this connection.

† Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 157, 1894.

‡ *Ibid.* No. 7605, 1861, terra-cotta. Louvre, No. 465, ditto.

§ *Cf.* Herr von Beckerath's in Berlin, and the Verrochio-school Magdalen in the Berlin Gallery, No. 94.

that Donatello was invited to Padua for the Church and that the Gattamelata was not commissioned until later.* At this time Padua was a centre of humanistic learning and intellectual activity. There was a hive of antiquarians and collectors, and, according to its lights, a thriving school of painters.† The Florentine Palla Strozzi was living there in retirement, and he may have been partly responsible for the invitation to Donatello. But the indigenous art of Padua was dependent on Venice, and needed some fertilising element. Squarcione with his 140 pupils founded his art upon traditional and conventional data: had it not been for Donatello and the radical changes which resulted from his sojourn at Padua, a fossilised school would have become firmly rooted, and would probably have influenced the whole of the Veneto. Mantegna was still young when Donatello arrived, and though there is no reason to suppose that he received work from Donatello as Squarcione did, it is clear that, without this influx of Southern ideas, he would have had some difficulty in shaking off the conventionalisms of his home. But though Donatello's immediate influence on Paduan art was decisive (and its ramifications soon extended to Venice), he was himself influenced by his fresh surroundings, and his native bent towards complexity was increased. He assimilated many of the local likes and dislikes. If Gattamelata had been erected in some Florentine square there would have been less ornament; if Colleone had been commissioned for Siena there would have been less *bragadoccio*. Leonardo never recovered his Tuscan frame of

* Michael Angelo Gloria; Donatello Fiorentino e le sue opere . . . a Padova, 1895, from which the dates are all quoted.

† See Kristeller's Mantegna, translated by S. A. Strong, 1901, p. 17.

mind after his sojourn in Milan. Donatello himself realised these novelties to the full, and their results upon his art. While he was making the intricate bas-reliefs, the selective genius of Luca della Robbia was composing the Florence Lunettes,* monumental in their simplicity. And though Vasari records the enthusiasm with which Donatello's productions were greeted in the North, the sculptor recognised the dangers of unqualified praise, and said he must return home to Florence to receive criticism and censure, the stimulus to better work and greater glory. But the *maggiore gloria* was not to be attained. He was old when he left Padua, and on his departure he had completed the greatest undertaking of his career—the High Altar of the Santo, with all its marble setting and the bronze figures. A crucifix, the Madonna and Child, six saints, a Pietà, twelve panels of angels, four reliefs of St Anthony's Miracles, the Symbols of the Evangelists, and a large marble Entombment. Donatello's altar was unfortunately dismantled in the seventeenth century, and the statues were dispersed throughout the Church. The altar was reconstructed a few years ago, and the bronzes have suffered during their exile, but they are still in good preservation. The new marble altar is a thoughtful and painstaking construction; its details are derived from Donatellesque motives, and the bronzes are fitted in with skill. It cannot, however, be in any sense a reproduction of the old altar, of which no drawing is preserved. And the earliest description, which has been carefully followed as far as circumstances allow, shows that the existing sculpture is incomplete: at least four marble reliefs have been lost.†

* Over the Sacristy doors in the Cathedral.

Anonimo Morelliano (1520–40). Ed. of Bassano, 1800, p. 3. *E da*

One may further remark that the twelve angels in high relief, now forming the face of the altar frontal, are so designed, especially as regards their aureoled heads, that one concludes it must have been Donatello's intention for them to have been looked up to rather than looked down upon. The present arrangement of the altar is simple and effective. The frontal itself is composed of children singing and playing music. In the centre is the Pietà, and on either side is an Evangelist's symbol flanked by two saints on the level of the top of the altar. The retable has two miracle reliefs, and between them a small bronze Christ, which has been put there in error. Above the retable is the Madonna with two saints on either side: the crucifix surmounts the whole composition. The back of the altar has the remaining Miracle reliefs and Evangelist symbols, together with the Entombment.

The Large Statues. Of the seven large free-standing statues, that of the Madonna and Child worthily occupies the central position. Nobody was more modern than Donatello, nobody less afraid of innovation. But in this Madonna he went back to archaic ideas, and we have a conception analogous to the versions of the two previous centuries:* indeed, his idea is still older, for there is something Byzantine in this liturgical Madonna, who gazes straight in front of her, and far down the nave of the Santo—a church with mosque-like domes, like those of the early Eastern architects. The Child is seated in her lap, as in the earliest

dietro l'altar sotto il scabello il Cristo morto, con le altre figure a circo, e le due figure da man destra con le altre due da man sinistra, pur de basso rilevo, ma de marmo, furono de mano de Donatello.

* *Cf.*, for instance, the Madonna over the door of the Pisa Baptistery.

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SAINT FRANCIS, THE MADONNA, AND SAINT ANTHONY

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

representation of the subject: here, however, the Christ is a child, with an element of helplessness almost indicated, whereas the primitive idea had been to show the vigour and often the features of a biggish boy. Donatello's version is much more pathetic, as the little Christ raises a tiny hand in benediction. The Virgin herself is of unequalled solemnity, while her young and gracious face, exquisite in expression and contour, is full of queenly beauty. But there is still this atmosphere of mystery, an enigmatic aloofness in spite of the warm human sentiment. The Sphinx's faces, with all their traditions of secrecy, contribute their share to the cryptic environment. Donatello uses them as the supports of the throne on which the Madonna is seated; behind it are Adam and Eve in relief: in front she herself shows the New Adam to the multitude, on whom he confers his blessing. St. Francis of Padua stands on the right of the Madonna, as founder of the Order, and taking precedence of St. Anthony, to whom the church is dedicated. He holds the crucifix and the book of rules. He is draped in the ordinary Franciscan habit, which falls round his feet, giving a stiffness to the figure as seen in profile, and making him appear rather short when seen from the front. The workmanship is good, the hands, with lightly shown stigmata, being excellent; but the lack of distinction in the figure makes one look more closely at the head, which is modelled with great power and freedom, showing that Donatello still possessed the vigour and penetration for which the Campanile prophets are notable. The head is full of character; not perhaps what one would expect from the apostle of self-abnegation: but it is determined, strong in the mouth and broad chin. It was, of course, only meant to be seen a few feet from the ground,

and the lines do not compare in depth with the Habbakuk or the Zuccone; but there is none the less an analogy in the manner by which Donatello calls in the assistance of light and shade to add tone and finish to the modelling. St. Anthony was a deservedly popular saint in Padua, where he preached and denounced the local tyrant; and he may be accounted the greatest man of Portuguese birth. But Donatello does not seem to have found the subject very inspiring. He has taken his idea from rather an ordinary friar such as he or we might see any day. It is a good homely face, neither worldly nor spiritual, and only redeemed from the commonplace by technical ability. St. Daniel is more interesting; the young deacon is extremely well posed, the plain and massive features being drawn with a firm and confident touch; and the deacon's vestments, which always take an easy and becoming fall, are decorated in a typical way with winged children arbitrarily introduced, and looking more like the detail of some bas-relief than a piece of embroidered ornament. St. Justina wears the coronet as princess, and bears the palm-leaf as martyr. She has no pronounced characteristic, the face being rather unemotional; but the gesture of her outstretched hand is not without an appealing dignity. The hair, like that of the Madonna, is parted in the centre, and stands off from the forehead, and then falls in rich tresses about her shoulders. It has not the soft and silken texture of the Madonna's hair, which is rendered with as great a skill as one sees in the Virgin of the Annunciation. In both these latter cases Donatello succeeds in giving to the hair an indescribable suggestion of something full of elasticity and lustre. But St. Justina's hair at least grows: so many sculptors of ability failed to indicate that needful quality.

St. Procdocimus and St. Louis are of subordinate merit, and show the work of assistants in several particulars. The former was first Bishop of Padua and converted the father of St. Justina to Christianity. At first sight the statue is pleasing, but on closer examination the weaknesses, especially in the face, become marked. There is indecision, not in the pose or general idea, but in the details which give character to the whole conception. The features are chiselled by a small *mesquin* personality, and what might have been a fine statue if carried out by Donatello has been ruined by his assistants. The ewer which the Bishop carries is a later addition, from the design of which one might almost argue that the statue itself is later than the others.* The St. Louis, wearing his episcopal robes above the Franciscan habit, his mitre decorated with a fleur-de-lys of royal France, is also hammered all over, giving the bronze the appearance of being dotted with little pin-holes. The head is, however, marked by the grave austerity for which the St. Louis in Santa Croce is so remarkable, and which became the typical rendering of the saint in fifteenth-century plastic art. However much Donatello may have allowed a free hand to his assistants in this statue, the fine qualities of the head are attributable to a strict adherence to his own sketch. The last of the great bronze figures is the crucifix above the high altar. It is magnificent, apart from the technical qualities which rival Donatello's most brilliant achievements. All the lines droop together in a wonderful *cadenza;* the face is transfigured by human pain, but all the superhuman power remains. Donatello combines the literal and

* *Cf.* drawings of ewers in Uffizzi by Giacomone da Faenza, sixteenth century.

symbolical meaning of the Cross; the Godhead is still there. Donatello did not forget that the crucified Christ, when represented by the sculptor, had to preserve all the immortality of the Son of God. His *contadino* Christ in Florence has its interest in art; this Christ marks the summit of his plastic ability; but it shows that, without any appeal to terror or emotionalism, without, indeed, suppressing the signs of physical pain, Donatello was able to give an overwhelming portrait of Christ's agony. The celestial and the terrestrial are unified and fused into one tremendous concentration of human suffering, tempered by divine power.

The Bronze Reliefs. The four panels of Miracles take the highest rank among Donatello's bas-reliefs. Their size is considerable, being about four feet long. They have one theme in common, namely, the supernatural gifts of St. Anthony and the veneration of the populace. Donatello's crowds are admirable; they are deep crowds. The people are rather hot and jostling each other: they stand on benches or stairs in order to get a better view of what is proceeding. The edges of the crowds, where the people are too far off to be active spectators, lose interest in the central incident; they gossip as bystanders or sit down: often they are shown actually leaving the place. It is singular how ill-designed many of the classical crowds are, especially the battle-scenes: they are constructed without regard for the human necessity of standing on something; and we have grotesque topsy-turvy compositions, the individual parts of which are unrivalled in technique.* Michael

* *Cf.* Battle of Romans and Barbarians, No. 12. Museo Nazionale, Rome.

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MIRACLE OF THE SPEAKING BABE

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

Angelo's first and last representation of a crowd in sculpture shows the same fault, which, indeed, was far from uncommon.* It arose from a desire to show more of the crowd than could be naturally seen from the eye level, and the whole relief was consequently covered with figures, the background proper being suppressed. In these Paduan reliefs Donatello manages to give ample density and variety, and there is never any doubt as to the ownership of legs or arms. His early relief at Siena, on the other hand, has a group where there is confusion, which is not justified in a quiet gathering of people. Another feature which the four reliefs have in common is Donatello's treatment of narrative. Ghiberti's plan was to put several incidents into one relief, forming a sequence of events leading up to the critical episode, to which he usually gave the best place in the foreground. He consistently followed up his formula in the second gates, and brought the practice to its perfection. Whether suitable or not for gates, it would have been an intelligible treatment of purely decorative reliefs, like those at Padua. Donatello, however, confines his plaques to single incidents: in one case only does he add a second detail, and there only as a corroborative fact. The narrative is shown in the crowd itself. Attitudes and expression are made to reflect the spirit of what has gone before, while the actual occurrence suffices to show the final issue of the story. Thus we have all the ideas of which others would have made a series of subordinate scenes: incredulity, fear, surprise, mockery, apathy and worship. The crowd shows everything which has already passed, and the composition of the bas-reliefs thus secures a striking homogeneity. It is difficult to

* Battle, Casa Buonarotti, Florence.

say which of them is best. The variety in dress, scene and physiognomy is so remarkable; varying, no doubt, according to the tastes of the *garzone* responsible for finishing it. Probably the miracle of the Speaking Babe is the best known. A nobleman of Ferrara doubted the honour of his wife; St. Anthony conferred the power of speech on her infant child, which proclaimed its mother's innocence. Donatello has put an exquisite little Madonna and Child just above the central figures of the legend. The composition of this group, as in the others, is broken by the architecture, otherwise the length of the bronzes might have tended to a monotonous row of figures. But the projecting background does not make the episode less coherent. The mother is just receiving back her baby from the saint; behind her are women, friends and others; whereas the opposite side of the relief is entirely occupied by men, who are around her husband; and the suggested conflict of the sexes is averted by the miracle. The husband, who wears an odd sort of *bonnet tricolore*, and several of his comrades are simply dressed in short cloaks open at the sides and ending just below the hip. The legs and arms, and especially the hands, are very well modelled. In this relief the actors are quiet and decorous, and where not motionless are moving slowly. The miracle of the Miser's Heart is more emotional: "where thy heart is there shall thy treasure be also." The miser having died, St. Anthony said that his heart would be found in his strong box: this was proved to be the case, and then when the body was opened it was found that his heart was absent. The scene is nominally inside a church: in the background is a procession of clergy and choristers with their cross and candles. In the centre is the bier with the corpse lying on it. The body is opened

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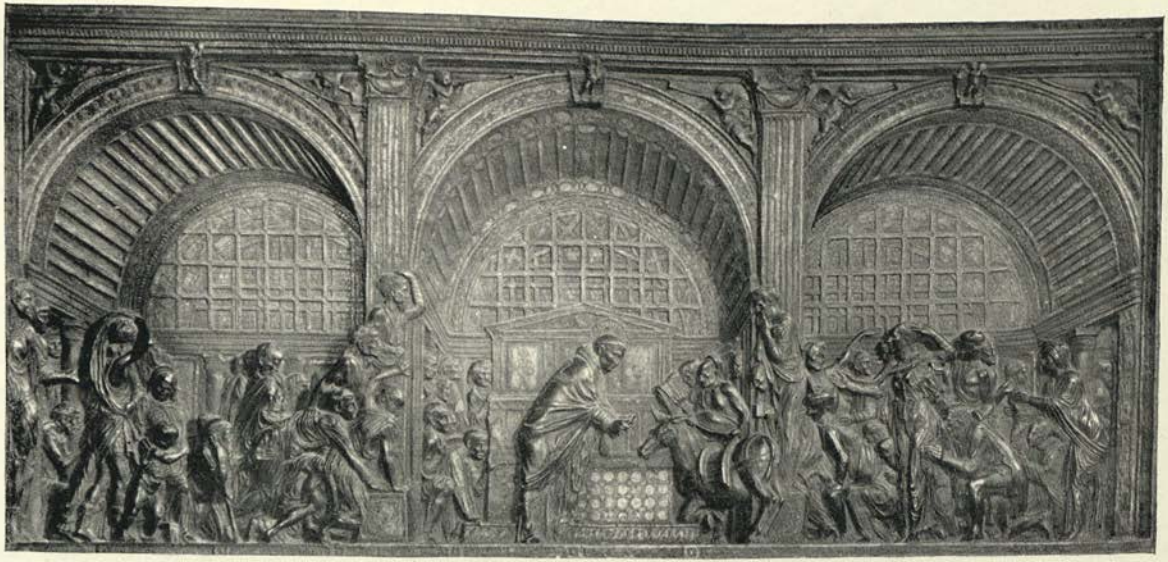
MIRACLE OF THE MISER'S HEART

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

and the crowd looks on in feverish though suppressed excitement. St. Anthony is pointing towards the dead man: and the crowd realises that the heart is absent—*ubi thesaurus ibi cor.* Numbers of people have dropped on to their knees, others kiss the ground where the saint stands. There are signs of distress and apprehension on all sides. Some children scuttle back to their parents; one of the mothers bends down to catch her child just as it is going to fall. Two boys have climbed on to an altar or pedestal to get a better view: one of them wears the peaked cap still worn by the undergraduates of *Padova la dotta.* The whole scene is immensely dramatic and grim, without any frenzy or excess; and its solemn effect is enhanced by the reserve of the people in spite of their excitement. The background is full of detail, largely obtained by the chisel: one part of it, with the stairs, ladders and upper storey, resembles the Lille relief. There are two important inscriptions, cut into the metal, to which reference will be made later. The subject of the third relief (now placed on the retable and already getting dimmed by candle-grease) is the healing of the youth Leonardo, who kicked his mother and confessed to St. Anthony, who properly observed that so sinful a foot should be cut off. The injunction was taken too literally, and the saint's miraculous power replaced the severed limb. Strictly speaking, this miracle takes place in the open air, for Donatello has introduced a rudimentary sun with most symmetrical rays, and half a dozen clouds which look like faults in the casting. But the whole relief is framed by an architectural structure, some amphitheatre with the seats ranged like steps. A balustrade runs all round the huge building, and a number of idlers standing about at the far end are reduced to insignificant proportions, thus giving

distance and depth to the scene. Leonardo lies on the ground in sad pain, and Anthony has just restored the foot. The central group is not much animated, but two or three of the men's heads are telling character-studies. Donatello has concentrated his crowd into the centre: at the sides the miracle passes unheeded. A fat man is soliloquising with his hand reposing on an ample stomach: a boy with a long stick and something like a knapsack on his back is attracting the attention of a young woman, who seems absorbed in watching the miracle: her child tries to pull her along to go closer. In the corner are some strange recumbent figures, almost classical in idea; and a tall woman completely veiled, with her face buried in her hands. The last of the reliefs illustrates St. Anthony's power over animals. One Bovidilla, a sceptic, possessed a mule; the saint offered the consecrated wafer to the animal when starving, and Bovidilla was converted by the refusal of the animal to eat it. The scene takes place within a church, which, so far as we see the apse and choir, is composed of three symmetrical chapels with vaulted and coffered roofs. There is plenty of classical detail, but still more of the Renaissance; there is no occasion to assume the design to have been copied from the Tempio di Pace or the Caracalla baths. St. Anthony occupies the centre, and the kneeling mule is on the right, his master close at hand. The church is crowded with people, who, on the whole, show more curiosity than reverence. Several garrulous boys by the door are amused; an old beggar hobbles in; a mother tries to keep a child quiet. Others take any post they can secure, and a good many are crouching on the ground in all sorts of postures, making a variety which amounts to unevenness. In all these panels the head of St. Anthony



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MIRACLE OF THE MULE

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

is of a finer type than that shown in the other version on the altar. The features are clear cut, and there is an air of earnest distinction which is not observed on the large statue. Speaking generally, one notices that while ample scope is allowed to the fancies of picturesque architecture in all these reliefs, Donatello always keeps it within proper bounds. Donatello was not tempted into the interacting problems of perspective and *intarsia*, which caused so many Paduan artists to lose grasp of the wider aspects of their calling. Then we notice how the crowd *qua* crowd plays its proper part: out of some two hundred faces in these panels not more than two or three look out to the spectator—a quality inherited by Mantegna. The reliefs are essentially local pictures of local significance; not only the costume, but the types are Paduan, such as we find in the local school of painting: but we find nothing of the kind in Donatello before the journey to the north, and the types scarcely reappear on the altar of San Lorenzo. But, in spite of this, the reliefs have a catholicity which extends their influence far beyond the limits within which Donatello confined his work. Finally, the wealth of local colouring and animation makes these reliefs among the earliest in which "genre" or "conversation" has prominence. They offer a most striking contrast to the sedate Florentine crowds painted in the Brancacci chapel by Masaccio.

The Symbols of the Evangelists.

There are four other bronze reliefs, the Symbols of the Evangelists. Donatello has contrived to invest these somewhat awkward themes with alternate drama and poetry. The emblems of Ezekiel's vision were too intricate for Western art, and long

before the fifteenth century they had been reduced to the simple forms of the lion, ox, eagle and angel, with no attribute except wings. All four reliefs are rectangular, about eighteen inches square. The ox is, of course, the least inspiring, and here as elsewhere is treated in a dry perfunctory manner. The oxen on the façade of Laon Cathedral offered some scope to the sculptor, being life-sized; but in a small relief the subject was not attractive. The lion is more vigorously treated. As a work of natural history he is better than the Marzocco, and he has a certain heraldic extravagance as well. The limbs have tension, the muscles are made of steel, and there is strength and watchfulness, attributes which led the early architects to rest the pilasters of the pulpit and portal upon lions' backs. But the eagle of St. John is superb, even grander than the famous classical marble of the same subject.* It has the broad expanse of wings, vibrating as though the bird were about to take flight: the long lithe body with its soft pectoral feathers, the striking claws, and the flattened head with cruel gleaming eye, all combine to give a *terribilità* which is, perhaps, unsurpassed in all the countless versions of the symbol. But the drama of the eagle is eclipsed by the quiet unostentatious poetry of the angel of St. Matthew. We see a girl of intense grace and refinement, winged as an angel and looking modestly downwards to the open gospel in her hands. Delicacy is the keynote pervading every detail of the relief: in her hands, arms and throat, in the soft curves of the young frame, and in the drapery itself, which suggests all that is dainty and pure —everywhere, in fact, we find charm and tenderness, rare even in a man like Ghiberti, almost unique in Donatello.

* The Walpole Eagle from the Tiber, belonging to the Earl of Wemyss.

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SYMBOL OF ST. MATTHEW

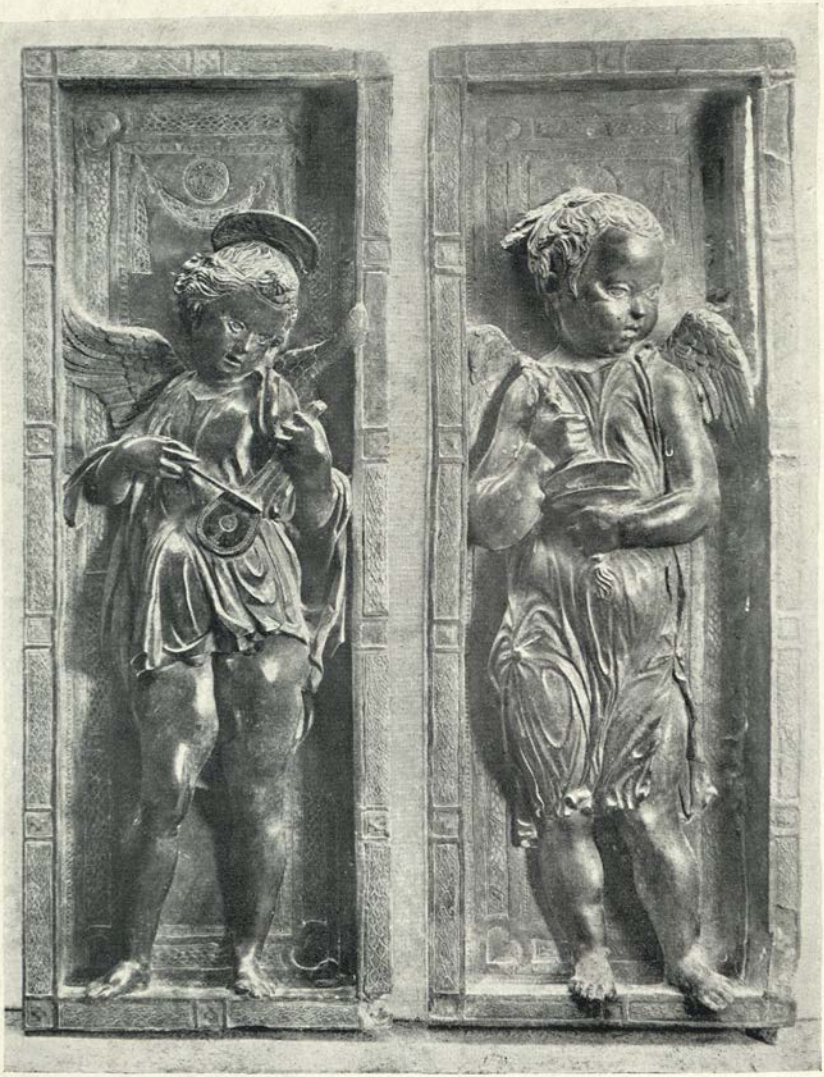
SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

The Choir of Angels. In the original contract with Donatello, ten angels were commissioned, and were exhibited on the provisional wooden altar (13, vi. '48). It appears, however, that they were insufficient, and two more panels were ordered. These may possibly be the reliefs in each of which a couple of angels are represented singing, certainly the most successful of all. There is a palpable inequality in the remainder. They not only show differences of treatment in the details of drapery, chiselling and general decoration, but there is a substantial lack of harmony in their broad conception. It is impossible to believe that the two angels leaning inwards against the edge of the relief (the fourth respectively from either end of the altar) could have been modelled by Donatello. Not only are they vulgar and commonplace, but they are malformed: well might Donatello long for criticism and censure if these two stupid little urchins were standards of his production. Next to one of these pipers is a child playing the lute, delicious in every respect: he is made by the genius, the other by the hack. They contrast in every particular—drapery, anatomy, face and technique. The lutist is admirable as he looks down at his instrument to catch the note; capital also is the boy playing the double pipe, with the close drapery swirling about his plump limbs, as one sees in San Francesco of Rimini, that temple dedicated to Isotta and to Childhood. The head of the boy playing the harp shows the best characteristics of this group. The hair is relatively short, and falls in thick glossy ringlets over his ears; it is bound by a heavy chaplet of leaves and rosettes; above this wreath the hair is smooth and orderly. There was no occasion to exclude the pleasing little touches, as in the

case of the Cantoria children, where deep holes penetrate the children's hair, so that the "distance should not consume the diligence." At Padua, where the choristers were to be seen a few feet only from the ground, the sculptor's efforts to show the warm shades and recesses of the hair were amply repaid. The boys singing the duets differ from the remainder: they are busily occupied with their music, carefully following the score. The disposition of two children in a panel only large enough for one has not been so successfully met as when Abraham and Isaac were fitted into the narrow niche on the Campanile; but the affectionate attitude of these boys and their sincerity make one overlook a slight technical shortcoming. The two heads in close proximity give a certain sense of atmosphere between them, not easily rendered when one of them had to be modelled in comparatively high-relief.

The Pietà and the Entombment.

The remaining work for the high altar consists of a marble Entombment and a bronze relief of Christ mourned by Angels, treated as a Pietà. The tabernacle door, which occupies the centre of the high altar, differs in shape, quality and design from everything else, and is wholly unworthy of its prominent position. The lower relief is, however, a work of exceptional interest. It is placed in the centre of the frontal with the reliefs of choristers on either side of it, a tragic culmination to all the happy children around it. The Christ is resting upright in the tomb, half of the figure only being visible. The head is bowed and the hands crossed: the face is wan and haggard. The body is modelled to emphasise the pronounced lines of the big



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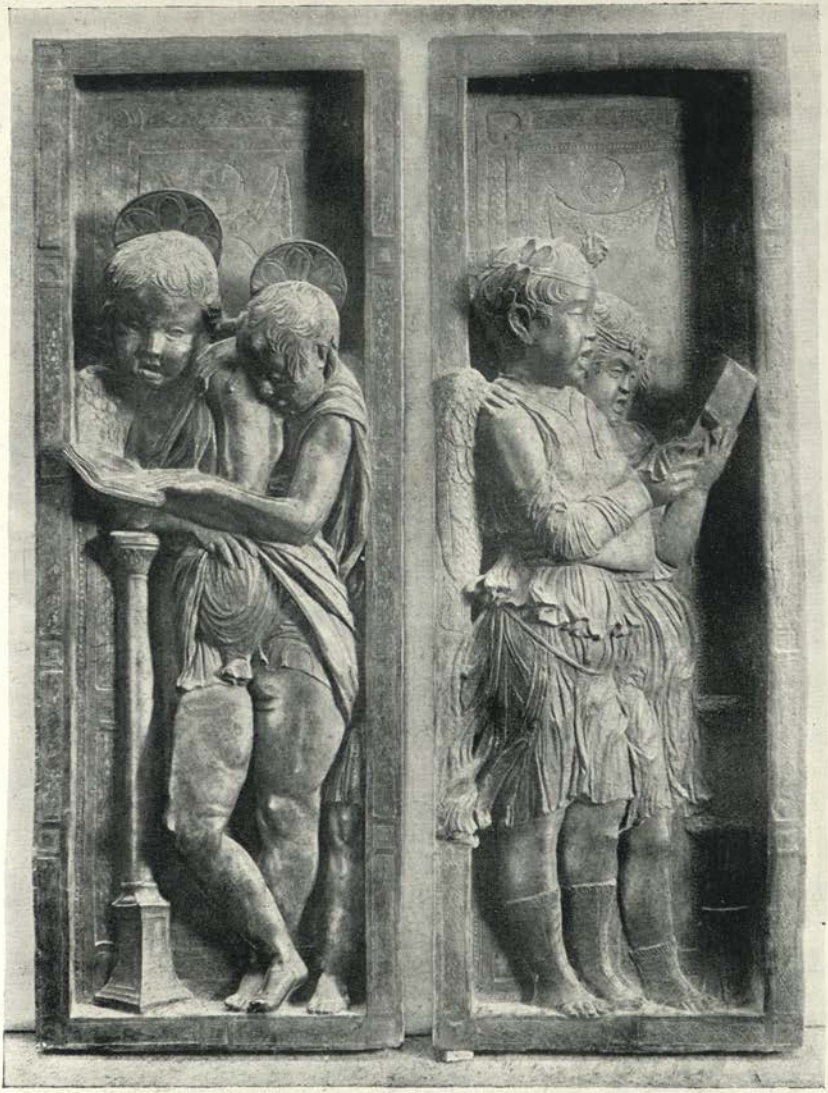
CHORISTERS

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA



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CHORISTERS

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

curve formed by the ribs from which the lower part of the body is fast sinking: Donatello did the same thing with the crucifix. An angel stands at each side of the Christ, holding up a curtain or pall behind the figure. Each of these boys has a hand pressed against his cheek, the picture of tragedy: they weep over the dead Saviour, their anguish is indescribable. In the marble version of the same subject in London,* the angels are actually supporting the Christ, who, without their maintenance, would fall down. His head is resting against one of the children's hands: one of the arms has slipped down inanimate, while the other hangs over the shoulder of the second angel, a consummate rendering of what is dead: the veins are tumified, the skin is shrinking, and the muscles are uncontrolled. This Christ is in some ways the more remarkable plastic achievement, though it is not so characteristic as the Paduan version. The two reliefs are probably coeval, though that in London, with its attendant angels, has indications of being rather earlier in date, and almost shows the hand of Michelozzo in one or two details. But the head of Christ, with its short thin beard, and the hair held back by a corded fillet, is similar to much that is exclusively Paduan. The Entombment, a very large marble relief, consists of eight life-sized figures, four of whom are lowering the body into the sepulchre. Here for the first time we have that frenzied and impassioned scene which became so common in Northern Italy. The Entombment on the St. Peter's Tabernacle is insipid by the side of this, where grief leads the Magdalen to tear out thick handfuls of her hair; others throw up their hands as they abandon

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7577, 1861. M. G. Dreyfus has a fine plaquette analogous to these large reliefs.

themselves, as they scream in ungovernable sorrow. It is a riot of woe, and the more solemn figures who are engaged with the dead body have grown grey with care. This relief dates a new departure: the Entombment and other episodes of the Passion henceforward lose their calm emblematic character, and are fraught with tragedy and gloom. Donatello's relief became the prototype for the Bellini, for Mantegna, and a host of artists who, without, perhaps, having seen the original, drew their inspiration from what it had already inspired. For a while this intensification of the last scenes of Christ's life bore good fruit for art, especially in the northern provinces: but after a certain point nervous exhaustion ensued and produced a kind of hysteria, where the Magdalen's tears must end in convulsive laughter, and where the tragedy is so demonstrative that the solemn element is utterly lost.* The profound pathos and teaching of the earlier scenes were exchanged for what was theatrical. But Tragedy always held a place in Italian, or rather in Christian art: it was out of place in antiquity. The smiling and perennial youth of the gods, their happinesses, loves, and adventures, gave relatively small scope for the personal aspects of tragedy. There was no need for vicarious or redemptive suffering: what pain existed, and they rarely expressed it in marble, was human in its origin and punitive in effect: Icarus, Niobe, Laocoon, Prometheus; and even here the proprieties of good taste imposed strict limits, beyond which the portrayal of tragedy could not go

* *Cf.*, for instance, Madame André's Pietà lunette, or the stone "Lamentation" in Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 314, 1878, almost German in its harsh realism. This came from the Palazzo Lazzara at Padua.

CHRIST MOURNED BY ANGELS

LONDON

without violating unwritten laws. It had to occupy a secondary place in their art: the dying gladiator was merely a broken toy tossed aside. Their tragedies were largely limited to Nemesis, the Moirai, the Erinnydes, and lower forms, such as harpies. But occasionally one gets a breath of mediævalism and its haunting mysteries. The Sleeping Fury at Rome, for instance,* where sleep steals in during a moment of respite from torture, is superb, and, moreover, stands almost alone in its presentment of a certain impelling tragedy, which, with the advent of Christianity, became an integral and dominating feature of its art.

Donatello's Assistants. The variety of workmanship at Padua would be an infallible proof that Donatello had the assistance of a number of disciples, even if we had no documentary evidence on the point. Bandinelli refers to their numbers: when needing help he wrote to the Grand Duke saying that Donatello always had eighteen or twenty assistants, without whose aid it would have been impossible for him to have made the Paduan altar.† But we also possess bills, contracts, and schedules, in which we can find the names of Donatello's *garzoni*. The work, it must be remembered, was not wholly confined to sculpture: among the earliest recorded payment to Donatello is that for structural work on the Loggia (30, iii. 1444). Giovanni Nani of Florence was already engaged there (3, iii. 43) as a sort of master mason on Donatello's arrival: he made the marble pedestal for the crucifix (19, vi. 47), and several others are mentioned in a subordinate capacity,

* In Ludovisi Buoncompagni Collection, Museo Nazionale, marble. *Cf.* also the bust of Minatia Polla, so called, which might be by Verrochio.

† 7, xii. 1549. Printed in Bottari, ii. 70.

such as Niccolo Cocaro (23, iv. 49), Meo and Pipo of Florence (30, iv. 49), Antonio of Lugano, *taia pria* (12, v. 49); Bartolomeo of Ferrara went to Valstagna to open up the quarry—*una montagna de lo alabastro* (13, viii. 46). Employment was also given to Jacomo, a goldsmith (9, v. 48), to Squarcione the painter (21, xi. 47), to Moscatelo, the maker of majolica (v. 49), and to Giovanni da Becato, who made a metal grille behind the altar. Francesco del Mayo and Andrea delle Caldiere were the chief bronze casters; a dozen or fifteen other names are recorded. None of these can have had much influence on the sculpture itself; but there were men of greater calibre, Giovanni da Pisa, Urbano da Cortona, Antonio Celino of Pisa, and Francesco Valente of Florence. Though called *garzoni* and *disipoli* of Donatello (June and Sept. 47), they soon became men of trained capacity, and were specifically mentioned in some of the contracts. Thus it appears that each was entrusted with one of the evangelist's symbols; they were also largely responsible for the bronze choristers (27, iv. 46). Their whims and idiosyncrasies are visible in many particulars: in the halos for instance. The gospel emblems all have halos, likewise most of the singing children, whereas there are none on the Madonna and the great statues of canonised saints on the altar. But it is impossible here to enter upon the most interesting problem of their respective shares on the altar sculpture, and how far they were independent of Donatello beyond the chiselling and polishing of the bronze; the subject would need discussion at too great length. It is, however, worth while to refer to some of their work, for which they were exclusively responsible. Thus the Fulgosio tomb in the Santo, and the superaltar in the Eremitani at Padua

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SUPER ALTAR BY GIOVANNI DA PISA

EREMITANI CHURCH, PADUA

(though much disfigured by paint), show that Giovanni da Pisa was influenced by Donatello to a remarkable degree. The composition of the altar consists of a broad relief of the Madonna with three saints on either side of her: below it is a *predella* divided into three panels; above, a frieze of dancing children similar to those on the pulpits of San Lorenzo. The composition is crowned by a tympanum and *putti* suggested by Donatello's Annunciation. Several of the larger figures might almost be the work of Donatello, though the personality of Giovanni makes itself felt throughout. Urbano of Cortona was another interesting man. He received a commission to decorate the chapel of the Madonna delle Grazie in the Sienese Cathedral,* and he had to make the Symbols of the Evangelists: *nel fregio . . . si debi fare IIII. evangelisti in forma d'animali.* Donatello himself, *excellentissimus sculptor, seu magister scultura,*† was commissioned later on to work in this chapel; but there can be no doubt that the angel of St. Matthew, now preserved in the Opera del Duomo,‡ is the work of Urbano. It is the identical design of the emblem on the Paduan altar, pleasant in its way, but differing in all the material elements of charm; but it is an important document in that it shows a further stage in the evolution of Donatello through the hand of a painstaking pupil. Of Celino and Valente our knowledge is less—perhaps because there was never any friction between the master and his assistants, which gives so unenviable a record to the relation of Michael Angelo with his pupils.§ The two inscriptions

* 19, x. 1451. Milanesi, ii. 271. † 17, x. 1457; *ibid.* 295.

‡ Marble, No. 149.

§ The rules of the Sienese guild of painters provided against strife within their own circles by imposing a fine upon whoever *dicesse vilania o parole ingiuriose al retore*: Art 55. Milanesi, i. 25.

on the background of the Miracle of the Miser's Heart, read as follows: "S. ANT. DI, GIOV DE SE E SUORŪ": and "S̄ DI PIERO E BARTOLOMEO E SUŌ." They have been variously interpreted. Some have suggested that they indicate the names of donors, or that the letter s means *sepulchrum*, and that they are in the nature of epitaphs. It would seem more probable that they are signatures of those who were occupied in giving final touches to the chiselling of the background.

Bellano and the Gattamelata Tombs.

One other sculptor, Bellano, is said by Vasari to have been so much affected by Donatello's influence that the work of the two men was often indistinguishable. This places Bellano too high. Scardeone, it is true, says he was *mirus cœlatura*;* but Gauricus is more accurate in calling him *ineptus artifex*.† He was really a lugubrious person, though on rare occasions he made a good thing, such, for instance, as the statuette of St. Jerome, belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus. But his large bas-relief of St. Anthony and the Mule‡ is stiff and laboured. The tomb of Roycelli, the *monarcha sapientie* in the Santo, with its wealth of poverty-stricken decoration, shows that Bellano was a man who could work on a large scale, but whose sense of fitness and harmony was weak. So also the Roccabonella fragments, in spite of a rugged, rough-hewn appearance, show an absence of ethical and intellectual qualities; while the fussy and breathless reliefs round the choir of the Santo

* "De antiq. urbis Patavii," 1560, p. 374.
† "De Sculptura," 1504, gathering f.
‡ Marble, in Sacristy of S. Antonio.

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TOMB OF GIOVANNI, SON OF GENERAL GATTAMELATA

PADUA

are farcical in several respects. There was another man influenced by Donatello, who must be nameless pending further investigation: his style cannot be identified with anything on the great altar, but he was a sculptor of immense power. He made the so-called shrine of Santa Giustina in London,* and the two Gattamelata monuments in the Santo. These tombs are very simple, consisting of the effigies of the two Condottieri, fully armed, but with bared heads. Below is a broad stone relief of children holding the scroll between them, as on the Coscia tomb in Florence. Above is a lunette containing painting, the whole composition being framed by a severe moulding, and surmounted by the family crest and badge. They are most remarkable. The two recumbent figures lie calm and peaceful: they show the ennobling aspect of death, the belief in a further existence. This sculptor with his sensitive touch makes us realise the migration. To "make the good end" was, indeed, a product of Christianity: antiquity was content if a man parted from life "handsomely." Greek art can, of course, show no sign of the Christian virtues of death. Like the Egyptians, their object was to present the dead as still alive, even where the aid of fiction had to be invoked. To them sleep and death are often indistinguishable; often again one is left in doubt as to which of the figures on a funeral relief represents the departed. With death the human body, having ceased to be the home of life, ceased also to be a welcome theme of art. These two Gattamelatas, father and son, have fought the good fight, and in the carved effigy acquire a statuesque repose which is full of dignity and pathos. The famous warrior of Ravenna, Guido Guidarelli as he is

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 75, 1879.

called, though of a later date, is fashioned in the same spirit; showing, moreover, certain peculiarities in the armour which one notices in the tombs at Padua. The d'Alagni monument in S. Domenico at Naples, and a tomb in the Carmine of Pisa, are similar in respect of sentiment. So, too, is the shrine of Santa Giustina in London, of which the details as well as the organic treatment leave no doubt as to its authorship, so closely does it resemble the tomb of Giovanni Gattamelata. It is a work of singular refinement and beauty. We see the recumbent figure of the saint on the façade of a sarcophagus, at either side of which are little angels made by the same hand and at the same date as those on Giovanni's tomb. Santa Giustina is modelled in low-relief; the sculptor seems to draw in the stone, and the drapery is like linen: not a blanket or counterpane, but some thin clinging material which is moulded to the form below. In some ways this precious work is analogous to the more famous bas-relief belonging to the Earl of Wemyss, the St. Cecilia which has been ascribed to Donatello. This wonderful thing is not well known: it has been seldom exhibited, and the photograph by which it is usually judged is taken from a reproduction moulded a generation ago. The original, of rather slaty Lavagna stone, has never been photographed, and the cast, many thousands of which exist, entirely fails to show the intangible and diaphanous qualities of the original. The widespread popularity of the St. Cecilia would (if possible) be enhanced were we more familiar with the genuine work itself. It is certainly one of the most accomplished examples of Italian plastic art; not, indeed, by Donatello himself, for there is a softness and glamour which cannot be associated with his chisel. But it has the unequalled

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TOMB OF GENERAL GATTAMELATA

SANT' ANTONIO, PADUA

SHRINE OF ST. JUSTINA

LONDON

tenderness and grace for which the Gattamelata tomb is so notable, placing its nameless author in the highest ranks of Italian sculpture.

Gattamelata. Erasmo Narni, General Gattamelata, died in 1443, and the Venetians, whom he had honourably served, granted the privilege of a site in the tributary town of Padua for the monument, the cost of which was borne by the family of the dead Condottiere. Donatello had to reconstruct the anatomy of a horse on a colossal scale. He was faced by the formidable task of making the first equestrian bronze statue erected in Italy during the Renaissance, and no model existed except the antique statue of Marcus Aurelius at Rome. Donatello was, however, familiar with the four horses on the façade of San Marco at Venice. He undertook to complete the Gattamelata monument by September 1453, but the bulk of the casting was finished as early as 1448, though the chiselling and chasing of the bronze required further work for two or three years. The statue was placed on the pedestal before the agreed date, and a conference was held at Venice to settle the price.* There were four assessors on either side, and it was finally agreed that the total payment should be a sum equivalent to about two thousand guineas in our own day. Donatello does not seem to have been hampered by his lack of experience. The work is adroitly handled, the technical difficulty of welding the large pieces of bronze is successfully overcome, and the metal is firm and self-supporting. There are faults, of course, though the fact that the horse ambles need not be

* 29, vi. 1453. Donatello is still described as *abitante in Padova.*

considered an error. But the relative proportions of the horse and rider are not quite accurately preserved, Gattamelata being, if anything, rather below the right scale. The monument is, however, so massive and grandiose that criticism seems out of place; indeed, in the presence of the statue one feels that everything is subordinated to the power and mastery of Gattamelata himself. The general is bareheaded, and the strong courageous face is modelled with directness and energy. The gesture is commanding, and he rides easily in the saddle. Colleone's statue at Venice is superior in many ways: yet the radical distinction between them is that whereas Gattamelata is the faithful portrait of a modest though successful warrior, it must be confessed that Verrochio makes an idealised soldier of fortune, full of bravado and swagger, a *Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre* of the Quattrocento. But, striking as the contrast of sentiment is, noticeable alike in the artist and his model, these two statues remain the finest equestrian monuments in the world, their one possible rival being Can Grande at Verona. Donatello has decorated Gattamelata's saddle and armour with a mass of delicate and vivacious detail, which modifies the severity without distracting the eye. The *putti* which act as pommels to the saddle are delightful little figures, and the damascened and chased fringes of the armour are excellent. Moreover, the armour does not overweight the figure. The horse, of rather a thick and "punchy" breed, is well suited to carry a heavy load; he is full of spirit, and is neighing and chafing, as the old critics pointed out. An enormous wooden horse, some twenty-four feet long, is preserved in the Sala della Raggione at Padua. It used to belong to the Capodalista family, and has been considered Donatello's

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GENERAL GATTAMELATA

PADUA

model for the Gattamelata charger. This is unlikely, and it was more probably used in some procession, being ridden by a huge emblematic figure. It is improbable that Donatello should have done more than sketch the design; but the head of the horse is admirable, with the feathery ears and bushy topknot which one finds in the Venice quadriga, on Gattamelata's steed, and on the colossal bronze head of a horse now preserved in the Naples Museum. This used to be considered an antique, but it is now established beyond all question that Donatello made it; and it was presented in 1471 to Count Mataloni by Lorenzo de' Medici. It is an interesting work, defective in some places, and treated similarly to classical examples; indeed, Donatello was obviously influenced in all his equine statuary by the most obvious classical horses at his command, namely, those at Venice. He does not seem to have taken ideas from the Marcus Aurelius, which he had not seen for upwards of ten years when commissioned to make the Gattamelata. The base of the statue is simple, but scarcely worthy of the monument it supports. The pedestal made by Leopardi for the Colleone monument is both more decorative and dignified. On Donatello's pedestal there are two marble reliefs of winged boys holding the general's helmet, badge and cuirass. The reliefs on the monument are copies of the maimed originals now preserved in a dark passage of the Santo cloister. There must be many statues elsewhere, now taken for originals, which are nothing more than replicas of what had gradually perished. If one closely examines the sculpture on some of the church façades—Siena Cathedral, for instance—one finds that most of the statues are only held together by numberless metal ties and clamps; and

one may safely assume that many of those in really good condition have been placed there at later dates.

Smaller Reliefs and Plaquettes.

The Gattamelata reliefs seem to be sixteenth-century work. They show a detail of which Donatello and his scholars were fond, namely, the Medusa's head. It reappears on the Martelli Patera* and on the sword-hilt in the Royal Armoury at Turin. The former has been ascribed to Donatello, but the attribution is untenable. It is a bronze medallion of a Satyr and Bacchante, executed with much skill, but not recalling the spirit or handling of Donatello. It is an admirable example of the bronze-work which became popular in Northern Italy, to which Donatello gave the initial impetus, and which soon became ultra-classical in style. The sword-hilt is more interesting, and it is signed "Opus Donatelli Flo." Some of the detail has a richness which might suggest rather a later date; but the general outline, especially the small crouching *putti*, was, no doubt, designed by the master. The history of this curious and unusual specimen is unknown, and it is outside Donatello's sphere of activity. Michael Angelo, it may be remembered, also had the caprice of making a sword for the Aldobrandini family. The manufacture of plaquettes, small bronze plates which were widely used for decorating caskets, inkstands, candlesticks, &c., became a specialised art; and some of these dainty reliefs are possibly made from Donatello's own designs. There are, however, a few larger bronzes of greater importance in which his personality was able to assert itself more freely than in the reduced plaquettes. But the work

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 8717, 1863.

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VENICE

of scholars and imitators has been frequently mistaken for Donatello's own productions. Thus the Ambras (Vienna) relief of the Entombment, with its exaggerated ideas of classical profile, must be the work of a scholar. The Sportello at Venice* also shows later Renaissance decoration in its rich arabesques, though two hands seem to have been employed—the four central *putti* and the two angels being more Donatellesque than the remainder. The relief of the Flagellation in Paris† is more important, as we have a rugged and severe treatment both in the subject and its execution: but the summary treatment of such details as the hair makes one doubtful if Donatello can have been wholly responsible. A somewhat analogous Flagellation in Berlin‡ is the work of a clever but halting plagiarist. He has inserted a Donatellesque background of arches showing the lines of stonework, and a pleasant detached girl who reminds us of the figure on the Siena and St. George reliefs. But the imitator's weak hand is betrayed by the anatomy of the three principal figures. The positions are those of force and energy, but there is no tension or muscular effort, and there is no vestige of vigour in the rounded backs and soft limbs. Even if Donatello furnished the original sketch, it is quite impossible that he should have executed or approved the carving. Madame André's Martyrdom of St. Sebastian is work in which the finishing-touches were probably added by a pupil, but this striking composition shows dramatic qualities which one must associate with Donatello himself. So also the tondo Madonna belonging to M. Gustave Dreyfus, in which the

* Museo Archeologico, Doge's Palace.

† Louvre, "His de la Salle Collection," No. 385.

‡ Marble, No. 39 B.

figures are ranged behind a balustrade, making the "garden enclosed"—a popular symbolical treatment of the Virgin and Child—is doubtless from one of Donatello's designs.* Though imperfect, the London Deposition or Lamentation† is an important work, and has a value as showing the methods of fastening figures in relief on to the foundation of the background, though in this case the bulk of the background is missing. Three other reliefs should be mentioned, all representing Christ on the Cross. Of these, the Berlin example,‡ though sadly injured since its acquisition for the museum, is notable; being, in fact, a genuine sketch by Donatello himself, and in a degree comparable to the clay study of the same subject in London.§ The bronze relief, belonging to Comte Isaac de Camondo in Paris, is a most remarkable work of the Paduan period. Donatello has succeeded in conveying the sense of desolating tragedy without any adventitious aid of violence or movement. The whole thing is massive, and treated with a studied simplicity which concentrates the silence and loneliness of the scene. It is superb, and superior to a varied treatment of the same subject in the Bargello. In this well-known relief the crowded scene is full of turmoil and confusion. In the foreground are the relatives and disciples of Christ. Many soldiers are introduced, some of whom closely resemble the tall men-at-arms in Mantegna's frescoes at Padua. Donatello's hand is obvious in the angels and in the three crucified figures, which are modelled with masterly conviction. The rest of the composition has

* *Cf.* a Donatellesque stucco Madonna beneath a *baldachino* belonging to Signor Bardini, who also possesses a stucco Entombment similar to the London bronze.

† Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 8552, 1863. Bronze.

‡ Stucco No. 41.

§ See p. 62.

been ruthlessly gilded and chased until the statuesque lines are lost in a mass of tiresome detail; which is regrettable, for the conception is fine.

The Madonnas. A whole treatise would be required to describe all the Madonnas which have been attributed to Donatello. Within the limits of this volume the discussion must be confined to certain groups which are directly related to him, ignoring a much larger number of subordinate interest. The tendency is to ascribe to Donatello many more than he can possibly have made—varying inversely from the attitude of modern criticism, which has asserted that not twenty paintings by Giorgione have survived. Hundreds of artists must have made these Madonnas, of which only a small minority are in bronze or marble. Many names of sculptors are recorded to whom we can only attribute one or two works; the remainder being generically ascribed to the school of some great man, and often enough to the great man himself. The bulk of these reliefs of the Madonna and Child are in stucco, terra-cotta, carta pesta and gesso—cheap malleable materials which were easily and rapidly worked: the reliefs were manufactured in great numbers for the market. Then again, well-known works were cast, and small differences in colour and finish often gave them the semblance of original work. Vasari says that almost every artist in Florence possessed a cast of Pollaiuolo's battle-piece.* Such facsimiles are eagerly sought after nowadays, and are treated as genuine works of the sculptor. It must also be remembered that during the last decades there has been a systematic multiplication

* v. 100.

of these reliefs, and that forgeries can be found in most of the great collections of Europe. The first difficulty encountered in trying to discept between Donatello and his school, is that authenticated examples from which to make our inductions are very rare. Donatello certainly made Madonnas in relief: Vasari mentions half a dozen; Neroccio, the Sienese sculptor, possessed *una Madonna di gesso di Donatello.** There are Madonnas on the tombs of Pope John and Cardinal Brancacci. The latter shows no trace of Donatello's craft, and the former is of indifferent merit, and was certainly not made by Donatello alone. There are two Madonnas at Padua, one the large altar statue, the other a tiny relief three inches in diameter on one of the bronze Miracle panels. The sources of stylistic data are therefore most scanty. One may say generally that in the authenticated Virgins as well as in the other heads of women, Donatello makes a marked nasal indenture, thus separating him from those later men who drew their heads with the classical profile, showing a straight and continuous line from the forehead down the nose. But even this cannot be pressed too far. As regards the Christ, Donatello seems to preserve the essence and immaturity of childhood. His treatment of the Child is never hieratic, and it is always full of warm human sentiment. The Paduan relief, for instance, is almost a *genre* representation of a mother and child, domestic and intimate, with nothing but the halos to indicate the higher meaning of the theme. Having said so much, we come to the other Madonnas which are assigned on various grounds to Donatello: those known as the Madonnas Pazzi, Orlandini, Siena Cathedral, Pietra Piana;

* Mentioned in his will. He died in 1500. Milanesi, iii. p. 8.

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MADONNA AND CHILD

SIENA CATHEDRAL

the London oval, the Madonna of the Rose, the Capella Medici group, and the Piot and Courajod Madonnas in the Louvre. All of these have one or more features which conflict with our ideas of Donatello. It is impossible to say that any one of them must inevitably be by Donatello himself; none of them carry their own sign-manual of authenticity. The Pazzi Madonna in Berlin * is now generally ascribed to Donatello himself, and certainly no more grandiose version of the subject exists. The Virgin is holding up the Child close to her beautiful face; she broods over him, and the countenance is full of foreboding. The solemnity of the large Paduan Madonna is visible here, and it is only made to apply to the Virgin, for the Child is a typical *bambino*. So, too, in the relief outside the transept door of Siena Cathedral we find this grim careworn expression and the sense of impending drama: the massacre of the Innocents is still to come. This relief, a marble *tondo*, is in such abnormally perfect condition that one wonders if it may not be a later *replica* of some original which the atmosphere disintegrated. Donatello must have provided the design; at any rate, it is difficult to suggest an alternative name. The four winged cherubs are, however, lifeless and ill-drawn, while the Christ is more like some of the *putti* on the Aragazzi reliefs than Donatello's typical boy. The share of Michelozzo in the reliefs ascribed to Donatello is larger than has been hitherto acknowledged. The Orlandini Madonna † yearns like a tigress as she holds up her child and gazes into its face; here again we have a

* Marble, No. 39. Versions in soft materials exist in the Louvre, in the André and Bardini Collections, and a variant in the Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7590, 1861.

† Marble, Berlin Museum.

composition for which Donatello must have been primarily responsible, though the full profile is attributable to inefficient handling of the marble rather than to deliberate intention. Signor Bardini's version of this relief has a delicacy lacking in the original; one touch of colour removes a certain awkwardness of the profile. The Madonna in the Via Pietra Piana at Florence belongs to a different category. Here again the design is Donatellesque, but the face of the Madonna has a dull and vacant look; not only is it without the powerful modelling of the Pazzi or Siena reliefs, but it shows none of the sentiment for which those two Madonnas are so remarkable. There are several reproductions in Berlin and London,* all differing from the Florentine version in the drapery of the headdress. Closely related to this Madonna is another composition which only exists in soft materials.† The Virgin, with long wavy hair, looks downwards towards her Child, who is looking outwards to the spectator. This is a work of merit, with something attractive in the anxious and clinging attitude of the Madonna. The large clay Madonna and Child in London,‡ the Christ sitting in a chair and the Virgin with hands joined in worship, has been the subject of much controversy. There are good grounds for doubting its authenticity. The angular treatment of the head and a dainty roundness of the wrist often indicate that Bastianini had a share in this class of work.§ This relief has all the

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7412, 1860; Berlin Museum; collections of Herr von Beckerath and Herr Richard von Kaufmann.

† Louvre, Berlin Museum; Verona, in the Viccolo Fogge; *cf.* also the relief under the archway in the Via de' Termini, Siena.

‡ Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 57, 1867.

§ Giovanni Bastianini, 1830-68, though the *doyen* of forgers, did not profit by his dexterity, and died almost penniless.

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"PAZZI" MADONNA

BERLIN

merits and demerits of the circular Piot Madonna in the Louvre.* Here, too, the handling of Bastianini has been detected, though there is a clumsiness which is seldom seen in the productions of that distinguished artist. The frame and the background, which are integral features of the composition, can leave no doubt as to the origin of this work. But the Piot relief has an interest which the London terra-cotta cannot boast, for a fifteenth-century original from which the copyist worked is in existence, now belonging to Signor Bardini. This is a tondo Madonna of uncoloured stucco, of no particular value in itself; but it is the model from which the Piot sophistication was contrived; or else it is a cast from the lost original of marble. It reveals all the whims of the copyist: the treatment of the hands, the lissome tissue of the drapery, and the angular structure of the skull. A less interesting forgery is the marble Madonna in London.† Three reproductions of the lost Donatellesque original exist, the Berlin copy‡ being in stucco, that at Bergamo terra-cotta. Signor Bardini has an effaced and poor copy of the same relief, in which the hand of the Madonna is obviously meant to be holding something; but the stucco has been much rubbed away and one cannot tell the original intention of the sculptor. But the two other genuine versions are in better condition and supply the answer, showing that the Virgin held a large rose between her fingers. The man who made the London relief copied from the incomplete version, and carved an empty meaningless hand with the fingers grasping something which does not exist.

* Terra-cotta.

† Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 8376, 1863.

‡ No. 53 B. Bergamo, Morelli Collection, No. 53.

The little oval Madonna in London * is a work of much interest. It is coloured stucco, and Dr. Bode, who has dated it as early as 1420–30, believes it to be the first example of the *Santa conversazione* in Italian plastic art. A variant belonging to Dr. Weisbach in Berlin is of equal importance, and both are probably original works and not casts. The Berlin relief is not so thickly painted as the London medallion, and shows signs of the actual modelling. There are contradictions in these valuable works. The music-making angels are like a figure on the Salome relief at Siena: but they are also related to Luca della Robbia's reliefs on the Campanile, and to a terra-cotta Madonna in London † (which reminds one of the Pellegrini Chapel); Matteo Civitale uses a similar type on the tomb of St. Regulus at Lucca; while the crowned saint of the London version was copied at a later date on a well-known plaquette forming the lid of a box of which several examples exist.‡ The figure of the Madonna and Child also suggests another hand; and with the exception of the stone relief in the Louvre, and another derived from it at Padua,§ it is the only case in which the Virgin is not shown in profile. These latter works are bold and vigorous, and must be ultimately referred to Donatello, the head of the Madonna being rendered by fluent and precise strokes of the chisel. A bronze relief in the Louvre (No. 390), which came from Fontainebleau, has Donatellesque motives; but the spiral coils of hair, and still more the fact that the Virgin's

* Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 93, 1882.

† *Ibid.* No. 7594, 1861.

‡ One was in the Spitzer Collection, another belongs to M. Gustave Dreyfus.

§ No. 294, Davillier bequest; and in the entrance hall to the Sacristy of the Eremitani at Padua.

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MADONNA AND CHILD

LOUVRE (NO. 389), PARIS

breasts are hammered into the likeness of *putti*'s faces—wholly alien to Donatello's serious ideas—sufficiently prove it to belong to the later Italian school which flourished at the French Court. The Courajod Madonna (Louvre, 389) is modestly called a schoolpiece; but it is a work of first-class importance, for which Donatello is to be credited. This is a very large relief in painted terra, the Madonna being in profile to the left, with a wan and saddened expression. The arm is stiff and wooden, while the undercutting of the profile, like that of the Siena tondo, is so pronounced that, when standing close to the wall on which the relief is fixed, one can see the Virgin's second eye—unduly prominent and much too near to the nose. This is a needless and distracting mannerism, though, of course, the blemish is only noticeable from one point of view, being quite invisible as one sees the relief from the front, or in a photograph. The Berlin Museum has another large Madonna comparable for its scale and rich colouring to the Courajod relief. This came from the convent of Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi at Florence.* The Child, draped in swaddling-clothes, stands up leaning against the Virgin, who looks downwards. Above them are four cherubs, full of character and vivacity, the whole composition being typical of Donatello, though naturally enough much of the primitive colouring has disappeared during the last four centuries. One other group remains to be noticed, founded upon the large marble relief in the Capella Medici of Santa Croce.† We detect Donatello's

* Terra-cotta No. 39a.

† The others are Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 7624, 1861, marble. Berlin Museum, stucco. Madame André, marble, finer than the London version. Marquise Arconati Visconti, Paris, marble, and a rough uncoloured stucco in the Casa Bardini.

ideas, but no sign of his handiwork: neither was he responsible for the composition, of which the governing feature is a total absence of his masterly occupation of space. There are also florescent details in the halos, drapery, and so forth, which are closer to Agostino di Duccio than to Donatello. Though not all by the same sculptor, these reliefs are most interesting and suggestive, showing the growth and activity of a small school which drew some inspiration from Donatello while preserving its own individuality. We find an intricate treatment of a very simple idea. As compositions, Donatello's Madonnas were always simple. But our knowledge of the subject is still empirical, and until the problem has been further sifted by the most severe tests of research and criticism, our opinions as to Donatello's personal share in the array of Madonnas must remain subject to revision.

The Pulpits of San Lorenzo.

Donatello was sixty-seven when he returned from Padua. He seems to have been unsettled during his later years, undertaking ambitious schemes which he did not execute, and hesitating whether Florence or Siena should be the home of his old age. The bronze pulpits of San Lorenzo * are the most important works of this period, and they were left unfinished at his death. Donatello was an old man, and the work bears witness to his advancing years. Bandinelli says that the roughness of the modelling was caused by failing eyesight,† and it is obvious that, notwithstanding

* Properly speaking, they are ambones. They stand in the west end of the nave of the church close to the junction of the transepts.

† 7, xii. 1547 . . . "*Donato non fece mai la più brutta opera,*" &c. Letter printed in Bottari, i. 70.

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FROM SANTA MARIA MADDALENA DEI PAZZI, FLORENCE

the signs of feverish activity, and an apparent desire to get the work finished, much was left uncompleted at his death. The pulpits were not even erected until a later date; some of the panels were subsequently added in wood, and others do not correctly fit into the structural design. But the genius of Donatello shines through the finishing-touches of his assistants. Drama is replaced by tragedy; and in these panels the concluding incidents of the Passion are pictured with intense earnestness and pathos. But Donatello would not allow gloom to monopolise his composition. The paradox of the pulpits consists in the frieze of *putti* above the reliefs: *putti* who dance, play, romp, and run about. Some of them are busily engaged in moving a heavy statue: others are pressing grapes into big cauldrons. The boy dragging along a violoncello as big as himself is delightful. The contrast afforded by this happy and buoyant throng to the unrelieved tragedy below is strikingly unconventional; and the spirit of both portions is so well maintained that there is neither conflict of emotion nor sense of incongruity. The scenes (including those added at a later date) are sixteen in number. Except the later reliefs of St. John, St. Luke, the Flagellation, and the Ecce Homo, all are of bronze, upon which more care seems to have been expended than on the clay models from which they were cast. On the southern pulpit the scene on the Mount of Olives shows the foreshortened Apostles sleeping soundly as in Mantegna's pictures. Christ before Pilate and Christ before Caiaphas are treated as different episodes, in two similar compartments of one great hall, separated by a large pier. The Crucifix and the Deposition are, perhaps, the most remarkable of all these reliefs: corresponding in many ways to works already described; but

not having been over-decorated like the Bargello relief, show greater dignity and less confusion. The background of the Deposition is flat, but broken here and there by faintly-indicated horsemen ; naked boys riding on shadowy steeds like those vague figures which seem to thread their way through some panel of Gothic tapestry. There is an element of *stiacciato* in the Entombment, giving it the air of a mystery rather than of an historical fact. The draperies are thin and graceful, suited to the softer modelling of the limbs: some of the faces are almost dainty. Passing to the northern pulpit, we come to three scenes divided by heavy buttresses, but unified by figures leaning against them, and overstepping the lateral boundaries of the reliefs. The subjects are the Descent into Limbo, the Resurrection and the Ascension. The link between the two former is a haggard emaciated Baptist. The Christ is old and tired. The people who welcome him in Limbo are old and tired, feebly pressing towards the Saviour. The Roman guards lie sleeping, self abandoned in their fatigue, while Christ, wearied and suffering, steps from the tomb with manifest effort. One feels that the physical infirmities of the artist are reflected in these two works, so vivid in their presentment of the heavy burden of advanced years. But in the Resurrection a fresh note is struck. The bystanders are gathered round the Christ, who gives the Benediction. His robe is held back by little angels, and the scene is pervaded by an atmosphere of staid and decorous calm. Donatello has treated this relief in a more archaic spirit. The absence of paroxysms of acute grief, giving a certain violence to other parts of the pulpits, makes the contrast of this relief more effective; but, even so, this scene of the Ascension is fraught with dramatic emphasis.

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SIDE PANEL OF PULPIT

SAN LORENZO, FLORENCE

The Descent of the Holy Ghost is less interesting. There is a monotony in the upraised hands, while the feeling of devotional rhapsody is perhaps unduly enforced. The relief of the Maries at the Tomb, which occupies the western end of this pulpit, is almost Pisanesque in the relative size of the people to the architecture. There is a combination of trees and pilasters seeming to support the long low roof beneath which the incident is portrayed. A curious feeling of intimacy is conveyed to the spectator. The pulpits are full of classical details—far more so than in anything we find at Padua. It is very noticeable in the armour of the soldiers, in their shields bearing the letters S. P. Q. R. and the scorpion, and in the antique vases which decorate the frieze. The centaurs holding the cartel on which Donatello has signed his name are, of course, classical in idea, while the boys with horses are suggested by the great Monte Cavallo statues.* Then, again, the architecture is replete with classical forms; in one relief Donatello introduces the Column of Trajan. But here, as elsewhere, the classicisms are held in check, and never invade or embarrass the dominant spirit of the Quattrocento. How far Donatello was helped by assistants must remain problematical in the absence of documentary evidence. Bellano and Bertoldo were in all probability responsible for a good deal. In the relief of St. Laurence it is possible that Donatello's share was relatively small.

* It is probable that these famous horses were mere wrecks in the fifteenth century. At any rate, Lafreri's engraving of 1546 shows one of them without breast or forelegs, the remainder of the horse being nothing but a large pillar of brick. Herr von Kaufmann has an admirable statuette of Donatello's latter period modelled from the horses on the San Lorenzo frieze. *Cf.* also Mantegna in the Madonna di San Zeno, Verona.

Moreover, one part of the frieze of children is so closely allied to the work of Giovanni da Pisa at Padua, that one is justified, on stylistic grounds, in suggesting that he may also have been employed. But it is certain that the share of Bellano must have been limited to the more technical portion of the work, for there is happily nothing to suggest the poverty of his inventive powers. These pulpits are very remarkable works; they have an inexhaustible wealth of detail in which Donatello can be studied with endless pleasure. The backgrounds are full of his architectural fancy, and the sustained effort put forth by Donatello is really astonishing. But he was an octogenarian, and there are signs of decay. Michael Angelo and Beethoven decayed. Dante and Shakespeare were too wise to decay; Shelley and Giorgione died too young. But the sculptor's intellect must be reinforced by keen eyes and a steady hand: of all artists, Nature finds him most vulnerable. Donatello's last work shows the fatigue of hand and eye, though the intellect never lost its ardent and strenuous activity. There was no petulance or meanness in his old age, no decadence; he merely grew old, and his personality was great until the end.

Donatello's Influence on Sculpture. The influence of Donatello on his three greatest contemporaries was small. Jacopo della Quercia always retained his own massive style. Luca della Robbia and Ghiberti—the Euphuist of Italian sculpture—were scarcely affected by the sterner principles of Donatello. All four men were, in fact, exponents of distinct and independent ideas, and handed on their traditions to separate groups of successors. Nanni di

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END PANEL OF PULPIT

SAN LORENZO, FLORENCE

Banco and Il Rosso were, however, impressed by Donatello's monumental work, while other sculptors, such as Simone Fiorentino, Vecchietta, Michelozzo, Andrea del Aquila and Buggiano (besides much anonymous talent) were largely influenced by him. It is owing to the fact that Donatello was the most influential man of his day that so many "schoolpieces" exist.* The influence on his successors is less easily determined, except so far as concerns the men who worked for him at Padua, together with Riccio, the most skilful bronze caster of his day, who indirectly owed a good deal to Donatello. But Urbano da Cortona and his colleagues produced little original work after their return from Padua: their training seems to have merged their individuality into the dominant style of Donatello; and much of their subsequent work is now ascribed to Donatello or his *bottega*. Verrochio, whom Gauricus calls Donatello's rival, owes little or nothing to the elder man, and the versatile sculptors who outlived Donatello, such as Rossellino, Benedetto da Maiano, Mino da Fiesole and Desiderio, show relatively small traces of his influence. But Donatello's sculpture acted as a restraining influence, a tonic: it was a living protest against flippancy and carelessness, and his influence was of service even where it was of a purely negative character. Through Bertoldo Donatello's influence extended to Michael Angelo, affecting his ideas of form: But Jacopo della Quercia, who was almost as great a man as Donatello, is the prototype of Michael Angelo's spirit. Jacopo ought to have founded

* *E.g.*, work wrongly attributed to Donatello: the figure of Plenty in the courtyard of the Canigiani Palace, Florence; the Lavabo in San Lorenzo; the two figures on the famous silver altar at Pistoja; the bronze busts in the Bargello; the font at Pietra Santa; chimney-pieces, gateways, *stemme*, and numberless Madonnas and small bronzes.

a powerful, indeed an overwhelming school of sculpture at Siena. Cozzarelli, Neroccio, and the Turini just fail to attain distinction; but their force and virility should have fructified Jacopo's ideas and developed a supreme school of monumental sculpture. As regards Michael Angelo, there can be no question of his having been influenced by Donatello's St. John the Evangelist and the Campanile Abraham. The *Madonna delle treppe** in a lesser degree is suggested by Donatello. The Trinity on the niche of St. Louis again reminds one of Michael Angelo's conception of the Eternal Father. His Bacchus in Berlin † was held to be the work of Donatello himself, and the Pietà in St. Peter's has also a reminiscence of the older master. But in all these cases the resemblance is physical. The intellectual genius of Michael Angelo owed nothing to Donatello. Condivi records one of Michael Angelo's rare *obiter dicta* about his predecessors ‡ to the effect that Donatello's work, much as he admired it, was inadequately polished owing to lack of patience. The criticism was not very sagacious, and one would least expect it from Michael Angelo, of whose work so much was left unfinished. But, at any rate, Donatello commanded his approval, and contributed something to one of the greatest artists of the world. But the ideals of Michael Angelo were too comprehensive to be derived from one source or another, too stupendous to spring from individuals. He sought out the universal form: he took mankind for his model; and while he typified humanity he effectively denationalised Italian sculpture.

* Casa Buonarotti, Florence.

† From the Gualandi Collection. It is attributed by some to a Neapolitan sculptor.

‡ "Vita," 1553, p. 14.

Early Criticism of Donatello. Donatello's activity is the best testimonial to the appreciation of his work during his lifetime. Sabba del Castiglione was proud to possess a specimen of Donatello's sculpture.* Commissions were showered on him in great numbers, and Gauricus says that he produced more than all his contemporaries.† Flavius Blondius of Forli compares him favourably with the ancients.‡ Bartolomeo Fazio warmly praised Donatello, his junior.§ Francesco d'Olanda‖ and Benvenuto Cellini ¶ also admired him. Lasca credited Donatello with having done for sculpture what Brunellesco did for architecture :

> " *E Donatello messe la scultura*
> *Nel dritto suo sentier ch' era smarrita*
> *Cosi l'architettura*
> *Storpiata, e guasta alle man' de' Tedeschi. . . .*"

and so forth.** Another early poem, the *Rappresentazione* of King Nebuchadnezzar, shows the great popularity of Donatello in the humbler walks of life.†† Vasari's rhetoric led him to say that Donatello was sent by Nature, indignant at seeing herself caricatured.‡‡ Bocchi claims

* "Ricordi," 1554, p. 51.

† "De Sculptura," 1504, gathering f. "Donatellus . . . *aere ligno, marmore laudatissimus, plura hujus unius manu extant opera, quam semel ab eo ad nos cæterorum omnium.*"

‡ "Italia Illustrata," Bâle, 1531, p. 305. "*Decorat etiam urbem Florentiam ingenio veterum laudibus respondente, Donatello Heracleotae Zeusi aequiparandus, ut vivos, juxta Virgilii verba, ducat de marmore vultus.*"

§ "De Viris illustribus," Florence ed. 1745, p. 51. "*Donatellus . . . excellet non aere tantum, sed etiam marmore notissimus, ut vivos vultus ducere, et ad antiquorum gloriam proxime accedere videatur.*"

‖ "Dialogues," Raczynski ed. Paris, 1846, p. 56.

¶ "Due Trattati," ed. Milanesi, 1857, passim.

** "Due Vite di Brunellesco," p. 142.

†† Semper, 321.

‡‡ "Lem.," iii. 243, in first edition.

that, having equalled the ancients and surpassed the sculptors of his own day, Donatello's name will live in the perpetual memory of mankind.*

Character and Personality of Donatello.

Donatello must be judged by his work alone. His intellect is only reflected in his handicraft. We know little about him, but all we know bears tribute to his high character. The very name by which he was called—Donatello—is a diminutive, a term of endearment. His generosity, his modesty, and a pardonable pride, are recorded in stories which have been generically applied to others, but which were specific to himself. He shared his purse with his friends:† he preferred plain clothing to the fine raiment offered by Cosimo de' Medici;‡ and he indignantly broke the statue for which a Genoese merchant was unwilling to pay a fair price.§ He was recognised as a man of honourable judgment, and he was called upon to act as assessor several times. The friend of the Medici, of Cyriac of Ancona, of Niccolo Niccoli, the greatest antiquarian of the day, and of Andrea della Robbia, one of the pall-bearers at his funeral, must have been a man of winning personality and considerable learning. But he was always simple and naïve: *benigno e cortese*, according to Vasari,‖ but as Summonte added with deeper insight, his work was far from simple.¶ He is one of the rare men of genius against whom no contemporary attack is recorded. He was con-

* 1677 edition. † Gauricus, b. 1.

‡ Vespasiano de' Bisticci, Vite.

§ "Vasari," iii. 253. ‖ *Ibid.* iii. 244.

¶ "*Fo in Fiorenza ad tempo de' nostri padri Donatello huomo raro, semplicissimo in ogni altra cosa excepto che in la scultura.*"

tent with little;* his life was even-tenored; his work, though not faultless, shows a steady and unbroken progress towards the noblest achievements of plastic art.

* Matteo degli Orghani, writing in 1434, says: "*Impero che è huomo ch' ogni picholo pasto è allui assai, e sta contento a ogni cosa.*" Guasti, iv. 475. Donatello died in 1466, probably on December 15. He was buried in San Lorenzo at the expense of the Medici. Masaccio painted his portrait in the Carmine, but it is lost. The Louvre panel No. 1272, ascribed to Paolo Ucello, shows the painter, Manetti, Brunellesco, and Donatello. Monuments have been recently erected to the sculptor in his native city. For Donatello's homes in Florence, see "Misc. Fiorentina," vol. i. No. 4, 1886, p. 60, and "Miscellanea d'arte," No. 3, 1903, p. 49.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

WORK LOST OR NOT EXECUTED

Padua.—For the Santo altar, a figure of God the Father, stone; a Deposition and the remaining bas-reliefs mentioned in the "Anonimo Morelliano;" a St. Sebastian, wood; a Madonna in the church of the Servi.

Ferrara.—Donatello probably worked there; in 1451 he visited the town as an assessor. Gualandi, iv. 35.

Modena.—Donatello also visited this town in 1451, and received a first instalment towards the equestrian statue of Borso d'Este. Campori, "Gli artisti Italiani." Modena, 1855, p. 185.

For *Mantua* he made a large number of works, including columns, capitals, images of the Madonna in stone and terra-cotta, a St. Andrew in tufo, &c.; also the design for a shrine of St. Anselm. See documents in Archivio Storico Lombardo, 1886, p. 666. At *Rome* a St. John Baptist, "Una testa" in the Minerva Church, and the portrait of Canon Morosini in Santa Maria Maggiore.

At *Siena* a Goliath, a silver crucifix, gates for the Cathedral, and a marble statue of San Bernardino.

At *Ancona* and *Orvieto* statues of St. John the Baptist.

At *Florence* the following works are lost: the Dovizia, a figure of Plenty, which stood in the Mercato Vecchio; two bronze heads for the Cantoria; the Colossi for the Cathedral; four large stucco Saints in San Lorenzo; a statue with

drapery of gilded lead made with Brunellesco. San Rossore for Ogni Santi; a reliquary of Santa Verdiana (Richa, ii. 231); Albizzi tombs. The Cathedral gates were never made. Bocchi, Cinelli, Vasari, and Borghini mention a large number of smaller works now unidentified; plaquettes, Madonnas, crucifixes, heraldic shields, busts and reliefs.

APPENDIX II

DOCUMENTS

THESE are printed as specimens of the original authorities upon which our authentic knowledge of Donatello is based.

A.

Denunzia de' Beni of 1427, stating Donatello's home, his substance, his partnership with Michelozzo; referring also to the bronze relief for the Siena Font and the figure of San Rossore. Also a list of the sculptor's family. (Gaye, i. 120.)

Donato di nicholo di betto, intagliatore, prestanziato nel quartiere di Sco. Spirito, gonfalone nichio, in fior. 1. s. 10 den. 2. Sanza niuna sustanza, eccietto un pocho di maserizie per mio uso edella mia famiglia.

E più esercito la detta arte insieme e a conpagnia con Michelozzo di bartolomeo, sanza niuna chorpo, salvo fior. 30 in più ferramenti et masserizie per detta arte.

E di detta conpagnia e bottegha tralgho quella sustanza et in quello modo, che per la scritta della sustanza di Michelozzo sopradetto appare nel quartiere di Sco. Giovanni G. dragho, che dice in lionardo di bartolomeo di gherardo e frategli. Eppiù ò avere dall' operaio di duomo di Siena fior. 180 per chagione duna storia dottone, gli feci più tempo fa.

Eppiù dal convento e frati dogni santi ò avere per chagione

duna meza fighura di bronzo di Sco. rossore della quale non sà fatto merchato niuno. Chredo restare avere più che fior 30.

truovomi con questa famiglia in chasa:

Donato danni 40.

Mª Orsa mia madre 80.

Mª Tita mia sirochia, vedova, sanza dote 45.

Giuliano figliuolo di detta Mª tita atratto 18.

Sto a pigione in una chasa di ghuglielmo adimari, posta ne chorso degli adimari e nel popolo Sco. Cristofano,—paghone fior. 15 l'anno.

B.

The contract for the payment of 1900 florins to Donatello in respect of the Bronze Gates for the Sacristy doors of the Cathedral, a work which was subsequently entrusted to Luca della Robbia. (Semper, p. 284.)

21. ii. 1437. Item commiserunt Nicolao Johannotii de Biliottis et Salito Jacobi de Risalitis duobus ex eorum officio locandi Donato N. B. B. civi Florentino magistro intagli faciendo duas portas de bronzo duabus novis sacristiis cathedralis ecclesie florentine pro pretio in totum flor. 1900 pro eo tempore et cum illis pactis et storiis et modis pro ut eis videbitur fore utilius et honorabilius pro dicta opera et quidquid fecerint circa predictum intelligatur et sit ac si factum foret per totum eorum officium.

C.

Payment for casting the bronze statue of St. Louis for the Paduan altar; also for two of the Miracle reliefs and two symbols of the Evangelists. (Gloria.)

19. vi. 1447. E a dì dicto avè Mº Andrea dal Mayo per far getare duy de i miracholli de S. Antonio e dui guagnelista e un S. Luixe. i quali va in lanchona de laltaro grande—lire 45 soldi 12.

D.

Payment to Donatello and some of his assistants. (Gloria.)

11. ii. 1447. E a dì ii dicto avè Donatello da Fiorenza per so nome de luy e de urbano e de Zuan da Pixa e de Antonio Celino e de Francesco del Vallente su garzon e de Nicolo depentor so desipollo over garzon per parte over sora la anchona over palla el dicto e i dicti de (*i.e.*, devono) fare al altaro grande del curo (*i.e.*, coro) del santo,—lire cento e soldi dexe.

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